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Saturday Review

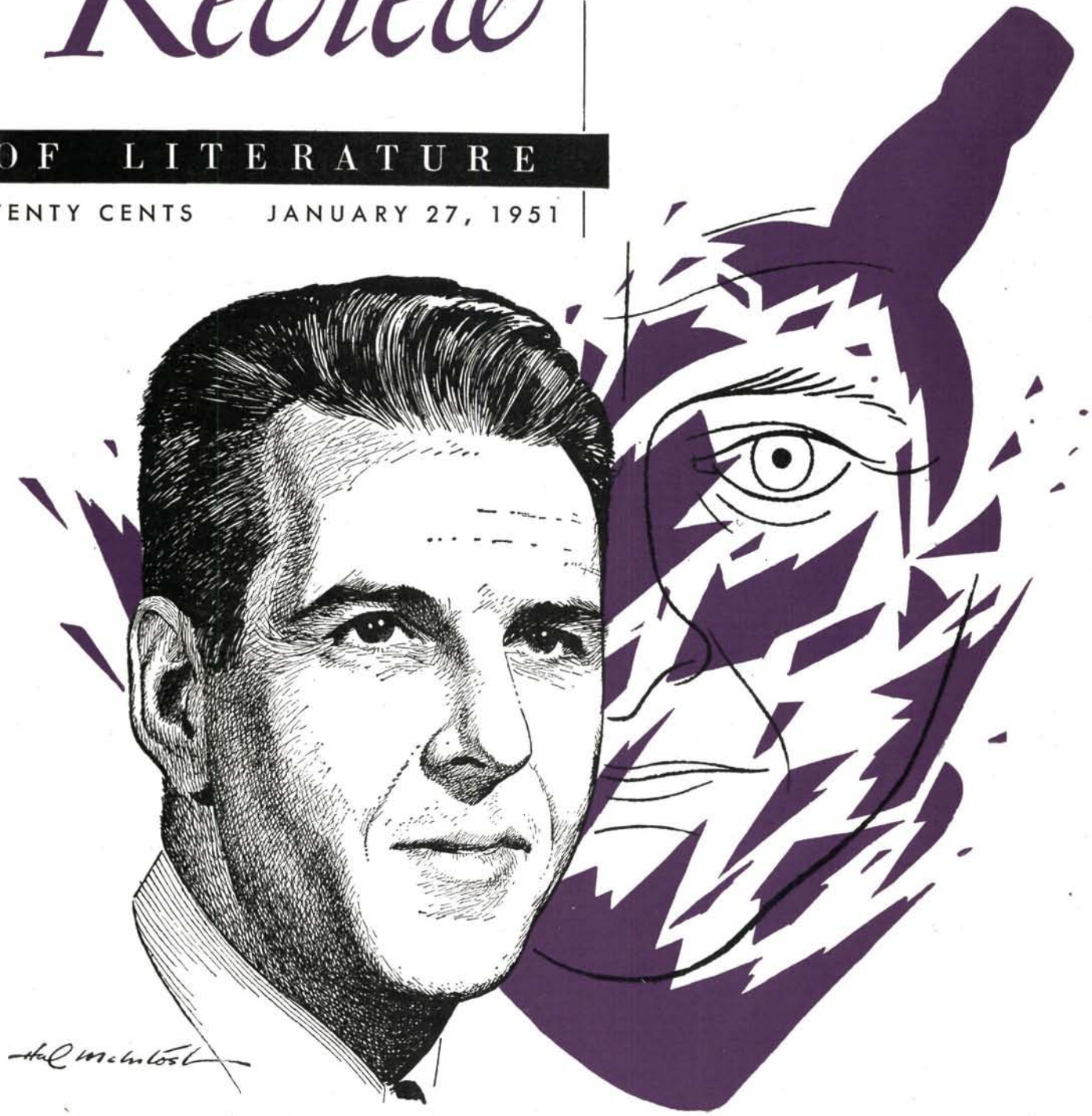
OF LITERATURE

TWENTY CENTS JANUARY 27, 1951

Verdi—Fifty Years After

By HERBERT WEINSTOCK

(See Recordings Section, page 43)



Arthur Mizener, author of "The Far Side of Paradise." (See page 10)

Sinclair Lewis: Remembrance of the Past

By HARRISON SMITH

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A COLUMN OF OUR OWN

"ARE you LUSTY or only DUSTY?" asks McMurray's, the Personalized Book Shop of Dallas, Texas, in an advertisement for THE LUSTY TEXANS OF DALLAS in the newspapers of that fantastic city. After reading the rest of the copy, we are convinced that booksellers in the Lone Star State are anything but dusty.

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"VERY soon all Texans will be one or the other. The lusty ones will have read John William Rogers' THE LUSTY TEXANS OF DALLAS. The dusty ones won't know about it. The party conversation of the lusty ones will glisten. The rest will just sit and listen.

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"JOHN WILLIAM ROGERS, noted columnist, critic and bon vivant — who is Lucius Beebe but a New Yorker's John William Rogers — is the one man in Texas equipped to write such a book, and he has done it.

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TO all of which we can't resist adding our own sober comment that THE LUSTY TEXANS OF DALLAS is the first comprehensive history of that fabulous Southwestern metropolis, and it should be noted that Mr. Rogers writes with a frankness, humor and understanding that makes his book a volume in the tradition of Cleveland Amory's THE PROPER BOSTONIANS. Naturally there is unrestrained enthusiasm for this book in Dallas, but the publisher feels that this excitement will not be confined to one locality — and that the inhabitants of the other forty-seven states will relish this insight into the minds and appetites of these spectacular citizens of the Independent Republic of Texas.

E.P.D.

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January 27, 1951

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MORROW

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$2.50 at bookstores

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TRADE Winds

THE LITERARY SCENE

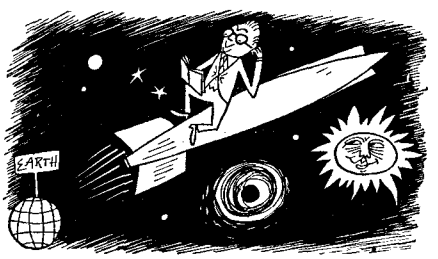
• • In New York the National Conference of Christians and Jews made final preparations for Brotherhood Week, which will be celebrated under its sponsorship from February 18 to 25. The magazine kit, yours for the asking from 38 Fourth Avenue, New York 16, includes pieces by President Truman, Irwin Edman, Henry Ford II, Mary Margaret McBride, Merle Miller, and Ralph Bunche. Bigotry is an ugly thing, particularly when it is found among educated, privileged citizens who, one might hope, would be able to conquer the prejudices acquired during childhood. Eric Johnston, general chairman of Brotherhood Week, sums it up with, "We simply can no longer afford to blind ourselves to the undermining racial and religious antagonisms in America. They will defeat our good intentions for a world brotherhood until we cast them out and live as brothers in our states, communities, and neighborhoods—not for a single week in any year, but day by day and year by year."

• • In Arlington, Vermont, Dorothy Canfield Fisher, distinguished judge of the Book-of-the-Month Club since the day of its founding, reluctantly relinquished the post to conserve her eyesight.

• • In Russell Lyne's witty "A Guidebook to Snobs" (Harper) he tabs the literary variety as one who "has not only read the book you are reading, but takes pleasure in telling you the names of all the earlier and more obscure books by the same author, and why each one was superior to the better-known one that has come to your attention." Mr. Lynes would have been in his element at the New York opening of "The Lady's Not for Burning." I overheard four affected, bejeweled dowagers making precisely the same observations after the first act: "What a relief to hear decent English spoken again on the Broadway stage." If one of the four really understood what John Gielgud had been talking about I'll eat the compiler of those "Hungry Critics" items in *The New Yorker*.

• • In Boston Helen Watts lingered so long at a party in honor of Frances Parkinson Keyes that Mr. Watts moaned, "We'll miss the Owl." Mrs. Watts replied haughtily "I don't give a hoot for the Owl."

• • In *Tomorrow* magazine novelist Christopher Isherwood noted: "It is easy to understand why science fiction,



and more particularly space-travel fiction, should be enjoying a revival of popularity at this time. Faced by probable destruction in a third world war, we turn naturally to dreams of escape from this age and this threatened planet. But that is not the whole of the explanation. For while the realistic action story is going through a phase of imaginative bankruptcy, the science-fiction story grows more prodigious, more ideologically daring. Instead of the grunts of cowboys and the fuddled sexual musings of half plastered private detectives, we are offered an adult, anthropological, and non-violent approach to the future of technocratic men and the inhabitants of other worlds. Insofar as the reading public is turning in this direction and forsaking the cops and the cowboys, it definitely is growing up."

• • In Beverly Hills Dorothy Parker dubbed a thin-skinned, perpetually disgruntled producer "Master of the Fancied Slight."

• • In Manhattan Stuyvesant Van Veen, convinced that most authors are disappointed painters (he cites as examples Thackeray, Butler, D. H. Lawrence, Maugham, and Dos Passos), proposes to establish a class in painting and drawing exclusively for writers. If you are interested, Mr. Van Veen may be reached at his studio, 131 East Nineteenth Street, New York 3.

• • In Spokane an optimistic book clerk ran a classified ad that read, "Wanted: a second-hand Chevrolet in good condition for $300 or less."

• • In London Nancy Mitford, author of "Pursuit of Love" and "Love in a Cold Climate," has written her first play. It is called "The Little Hut," it stars Robert Morley and Joan Tetzel, and it is a clean sell-out at all performances.

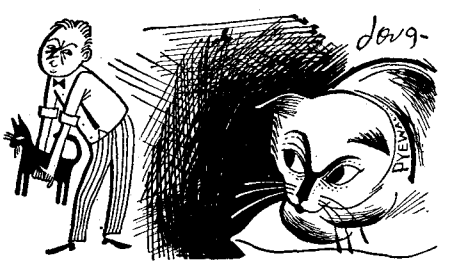
• • In Washington a card demanding "What did you think of this book?" fluttered from the pages of a copy of "Presidents Who Have Known Me." The reader filled it out: "Very disappointing. To me there's nothing new in it," signed his name: "George E. Allen," and mailed it to the publishers.

• • In Philadelphia George Kaufman, searching for words to describe a producer who had incurred his disfavor, summed it all up with "He's a sort of Jed Harris rolled into one." Harris, meanwhile, impervious to such jibes, was supervising Billy Rose's hit TV program and preparing to produce Thornton Wilder's almost-finished play, "Emporium." Besides working on "Emporium," Wilder is lecturing at Harvard. Also toiling on the ivy circuit are Irwin Shaw at NYU, Marc Connelly at Yale, Bill Targ at the New School for Social Research, and Saxe Commins and Ian Ballantine at Columbia.

• • In the office of E. P. Dutton orders were being counted for Ray Sherman's "How to Win an Argument with a Communist." One note, on the letterhead of a prominent Wall Street broker, read, "Is it true that you are publishing a book called 'How to Win an Argument with an Economist'?" Elliot Graham, Dutton publicist, answered, "We can handle Communists, but you are asking too much!"

In the Dutton safe, incidentally, there now reposes a contract covering the memoirs of Lawrence Langner, Svengali of the Theatre Guild.

• • In Durham a North Carolina student mailed a manuscript to his favor-



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ite publisher, attached a note reading, "Please tell me as soon as possible if you think my brain-child is Knopf-able." Three days later he received a reply from the head of the firm himself, brief but to the point: "Kno."

• • In Chicago the American Library Association planned to make its seventy-fifth anniversary convention, from July 4 to 14, the best in its history.

• • In Nyack Ben Hecht had finished 600 pages of his autobiography, was only half way through the story of his distinguished career.

• • In Boston that gallant lady Alice Dixon Bond is writing her reminiscences under the title of "Minding My Own Business." Putnam will be the publisher.

• • In John Van Druten's successful comedy "Bell, Book, and Candle" a Siamese cat named Pyewacket plays an important role and has developed into a first-class ham. John McClain says the stage manager curbed its temperamental outbursts by producing a stuffed cat as understudy. He has only to wave it in the air and Pyewacket meekly subsides. It is understood that Lilli Palmer and Rex Harrison require different tactics.

• • In Hollywood Mike Connolly knows a bookseller who keeps on his desk a cardboard container with a slot for coins on its top and a sign reading "Help stamp out TV."

• • In Chicago Fred Gardner, well-known bookman from Scranton, noted a sign on the Hotel Sheraton Plaza bulletin board that read "Simon and Schuster. Grand Ball Room. 8 P.M." Taking it for granted that he would be welcome at any big publisher's shindig Gardner presented himself at the appointed hour and promptly found himself engulfed in a sea of strange faces. A Mr. Simon, it developed, was marrying a Miss Schuster. Neither had the slightest connection with the book business. The Simon clan assumed he was a Schuster guest; the Schusters tabbed him for a Simonite. Mr. Gardner decided explanations would be too difficult, drank, ate, and danced to his heart's content and went to bed caroling, "There's no business like book business."

• • I feel too deeply about the death of Sinclair Lewis to comment at this time. I hope to devote a future column to a story of his achievements and innumerable acts of generosity.

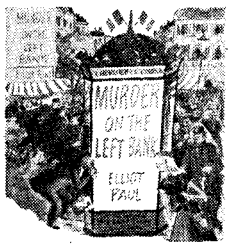
—BENNETT CERF.

RANDOM HOUSE

BOOKS

ELLIOT PAUL'S

Murder on the Left Bank



Cherchez le corpse! Elliot Paul is back in Paris . . . where *l'amour* gives way to *la mort* as that unorthodox detective Homer Evans sleuths his way through a zany crew of bohemians, existentialists, and wild, wild *Américains.*

The new mystery-extravaganza by the author of THE LAST TIME I SAW PARIS and HUGGER-MUGGER IN THE LOUVRE. *$2.50*

Never Give the Heart

By ANN WILLETS. The story of a woman's attempt to escape her conventional marriage and renew the love affair that had once given meaning to her life. A witty and knowledgeable tale of the too-rich and too-free young people of the International Set. *$3.00*

Point of Honor

By M. R. KADISH. This is that rare literary occurrence, a novel of action by a man of thought. On the surface a tale of the violence of men at war, it is, more deeply, a portrayal of man's moral problems in a strangely barbaric world. *$3.00*

The Storm Cloud

By LETTIE ROGERS. The story of China's Joan of Arc. A novel of earlier, more hopeful days when the beautiful Third Daughter of the House of Koo looked for death and found love . . . and became a legend to her people. By the author of SOUTH OF HEAVEN. *$3.00*

East Wind Over Prague

By JAN STRANSKY. A Czech patriot reveals how Russia is winning the allegiance of Europe's surviving democrats. One of the most urgent documents to come out of Stalin's empire of fear. *$3.00*

AT ALL BOOKSTORES, ***RANDOM HOUSE,*** *NEW YORK*

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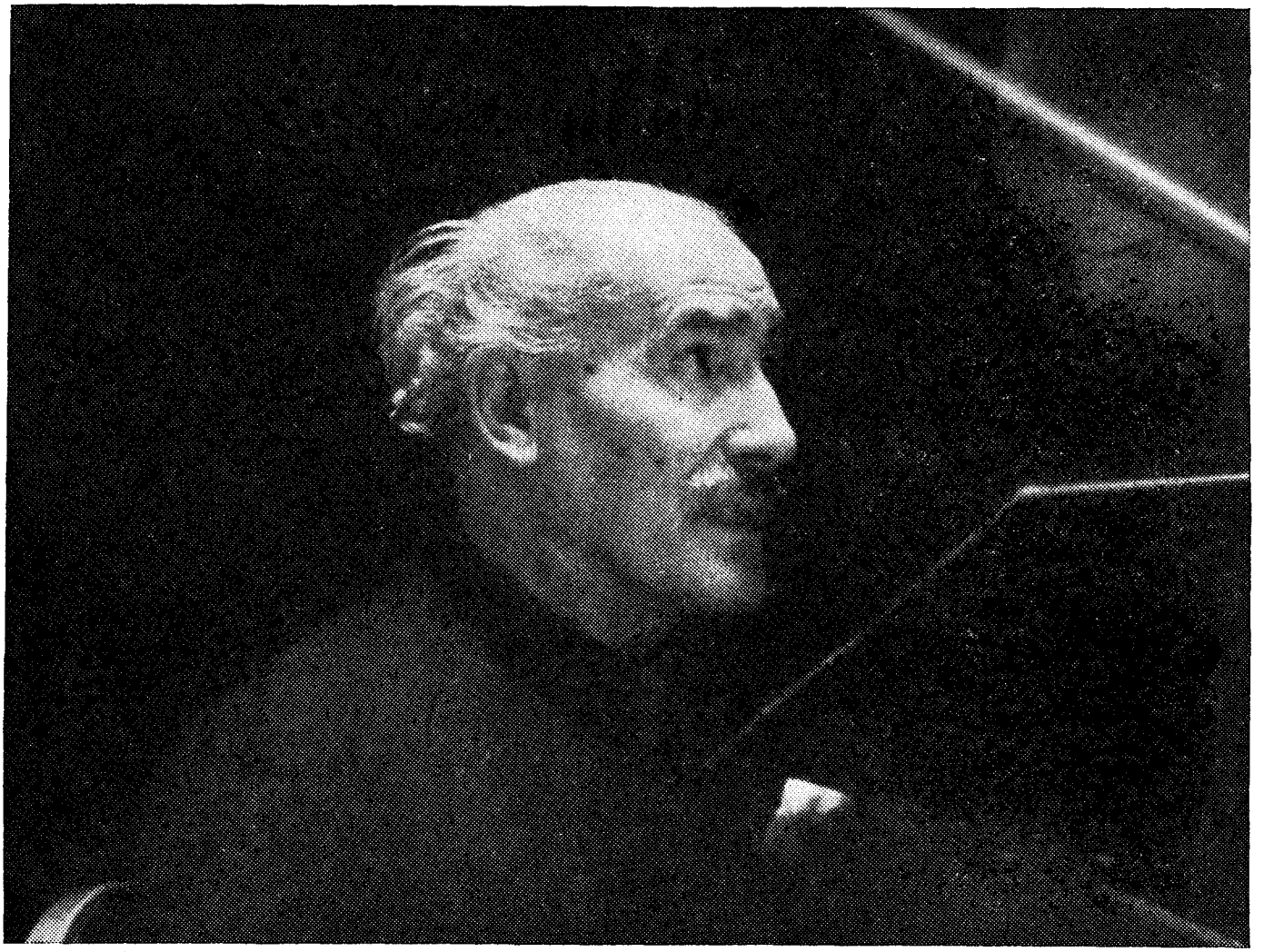

A contemporary masterpiece . . .

Maestro Arturo Toscanini

conducting The NBC Symphony Orchestra in

Verdi's Requiem

on NBC Radio 6:00—7:30 PM EST Saturday, January 27, 1951

Maestro Toscanini will conduct 5 additional concerts Saturday 6:30—7:30 PM, February 3 through March 3.

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The Saturday Review of Literature

Sinclair Lewis: Remembrance of the Past

HARRISON SMITH

Harrison Smith

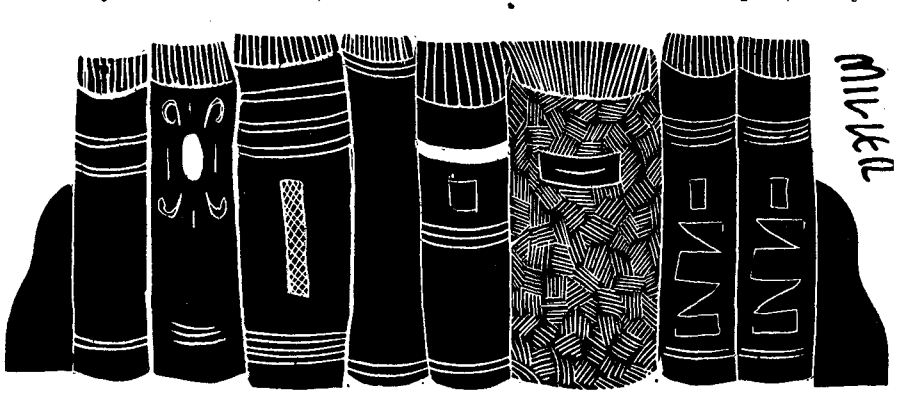
THOUGH I had known shortly before his death that Sinclair Lewis was living as an invalid in a large over-decorated apartment in Rome, never venturing to the street, but busy at his desk with a new novel, I did not feel at first any vital concern for my old friend. For at least two years I had not seen him. His passages from his huge house in the Berkshires through New York on his way to Europe were brief, and the truth is that though we had never seriously quarreled and he was always affectionate and kind to me our lives had drifted apart, and for this I can only cry, like others, "*mea culpa*."

I had seen him in illness before and knew what care he had taken of himself in his later years; that he went to bed early and rose early and slept again before nightfall; that he was at other times at work. I knew the incredibly detailed plans he drew up for each book, how thoroughly he explored the life, the streets and houses, the background and ancestry of his characters. I assumed that he was engaged on the outline for a novel which he expected to finish in July, perhaps faintly reminiscent of "Dodsworth," about Americans in Rome or in Florence, where he had taken a villa. I knew that he had engaged an English secretary, a Major Alexander Manson, who was for the time his companion and who with his charming Italian wife was living with him in Rome. It pleased me to think that this loneliest of men had found at last someone who could be a friend to him.

Then suddenly I began to worry about him. The image came back to me of the gaunt, lean man with whom I had not so long ago shared an early breakfast in his lonely hillside house, with the pale northern sun illuminating a countenance ravaged with the ever-progressing skin disease which had cursed him for many years and which had aged him far beyond his years. That morning he seemed to have bad luck with his teeth, too, or perhaps it was only that his latest siege in the hospital X-ray room had pulled up his upper lip so that he seemed to be snarling at the world. But his eyes! I shall never forget them as they suddenly widened and showed his awareness that I was shrinking from him; they were filled with a melancholy which overwhelmed me with remorse and, far worse, pity—for who would have the hardihood to pity such a man as I knew him to be.

Two hours later, immaculately dressed, he was the old Sinclair Lewis again, brilliant, precise, sparkling, and kindly. We got out the chess board, as we had the night before. I had taught him to play badly three or four years before, because I had felt that this might be the one diversion which could amuse him, for he was a man with not the slightest interest in sport or cards or any of the time-killing devices of the ordinary person. How otherwise could you entertain a man who is sheer intellect? He was more than a match for me, and before long I put an end to it, for his concentration on the game was frightening: he began to breathe too fast and too loudly so that the noise of it seemed to fill the huge, empty room. I asked him whether there was not someone in Williamstown with whom he played. I don't believe that he sensed the grim humor of his reply, which gave me a dark glimpse into his solitary life. He had two servants, a butler and a pleasant colored maid. "I have been trying to teach her chess but," he said ruefully, "she never seems to be able to learn the knight's move. I have to make it for her."

I awoke suddenly one night a week before he died and saw Lewis looking mournfully across his breakfast table at me, and my mind went back into the past, to my first meeting with him in his narrow room on Charles Street in Greenwich Village. I had been a freshman at Yale when he was a senior and an editor of the Lit, but I did not even know him by name until the evening I went over to Charles Street to visit



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George Soule, who was employed by that time in the publishing house of Frederick A. Stokes, where Lewis was reading manuscripts. It was impossible to concentrate on what George was saying in his calm, wise way for a loud, intense voice penetrated the walls and echoed down the dusty stairs.

"That's Red Lewis," George said, "you've got to meet him." And there he was, perched like a crane on a couch, tall, lanky, red-headed, all knees and joints, sawing his hand up and down in a wildly passionate attack on an anonymous young man who was unable to get a word in edgewise. "Good Lord," I thought, "here's a revivalist minister on the loose." I stayed silent in awe and admiration. For the first time in my life I was aware that I was listening to a man who violently and passionately cared about the same kind of things that had been vaguely concerning me, that here was a man dangerously aroused, brilliant. Part of my own awakening had come from reading Bernard Shaw and H. G. Wells. I thought of Lewis as a beardless, younger Shaw, or another Wells perhaps, and suddenly I knew that I had met my first genius. I had never liked to use this banal word, but then and later I attached it in my mind without embarrassment to Sinclair Lewis.

IT WAS Lewis, as well as George Soule, who drew me to the musty old rooming house where, as one lucky enough to have a small income, I took the dark parlor room downstairs. Cats, scarred and beaten up from battles and backyard love affairs, crept in on cold nights when I opened my window, until the black room around my bed seemed to be illuminated with the fire of green eyes. I began to know Lewis and to hear about the doctor father he worshiped. There were tales of riding with him on his rounds which I could match, because my own father had belonged to that noble and vanishing breed of general practitioners, and very different tales of Yale—where sleekly groomed and mannered youngsters from Groton, Exeter, and Hotchkiss passed the lanky red-headed Westerner on the campus with quick glances of mistrust.

He never complained, though one could read between the lines the reason why he had left Yale in his junior year to keep the furnace going in Upton Sinclair's Socialist colony, Helicon Hall, somewhere in back of the Palisades. Even then I thought that his return to Yale to study another year for his degree was astonishing, though I did not until later conceive that the motives that brought this adventurer back to the dusty shore were the honesty and integrity which he maintained in practical affairs throughout his life. It was simply that he owed it to his father, whose resources had been strained by sending a boy to Yale, however frugally he might be able to live, instead of to a state university.

Years later his frustration and youthful sense of his social inadequacy at Yale resulted in a curious episode which would have been possible only for a man with his fabulous memory. One day he burst into the Irving Place apartment where I was placidly living with George Soule. "You've got to come to my class dinner. I am going to make such a speech as nobody has made before." "They won't let me in!" I said. "And I won't hide under the table even to listen to you." He stood in the living room pointing a lean forefinger at an invisible audience behind an imaginary banquet table. One by one he told them off, a score and more of them, men he had not met since he left college. "You, Henry So-and-So, you Arthur, you George, you Peter!" He recalled every time when he had been cut, laughed at, stared at scornfully, interrupted rudely. He remembered the name, the place, the year, the moment, and whether it had been raining or the sun shone.

It was fabulous, catastrophic! I laughed until I fell off the couch. "They will kill you," I said weakly. "To hell with them," he said. The next day he was sheepish. He said, "My God, they loved it. They laughed and clapped and raised hell." It was the first, and maybe the last, class dinner he ever attended; he had waited all those years for his revenge, and I have often wondered just what his thoughts were when Yale gave him an honorary degree in 1936.

Back in those years I wondered why Lewis liked me, wanted me to visit him so often, or drive with him. Though I was full of half-baked speculations about everything in the world, I could not conceivably match him. He was the best impromptu speaker I have ever listened to and as a mimic he was superb. There was a time later when that obscene caricature of a Kansas City clergyman he named Elmer Gantry obsessed him. It was easy enough for Lewis to resemble what used to be known as a "God-hopper" in his worst moments, but the nasal, inhuman voice he developed for the performance, the hypocritical inanities he mouthed so unctuously were more than I could bear. He was equally good with the smoking-car Babbitts, realtors, little businessmen, the entire tribe of Middlewestern males with which he startled the critics in "Main Street" and later novels. I am sure that some of them were invented while he was talking and were filed away somewhere in that cavernous mind for reference years later. Curiously enough, he never satirized women in conversation, nor did he enter into the long and half-adolescent discussions of sex everyone indulged in in the Twenties.

WE HAD foolish times together. Both of us treasured small adventures and the human curiosities we came across. I can bring back to mind a trip to Cape Cod to visit Lewis. I am not sure now that he was at that time on his honeymoon with Grace Hegger, the tall, slim, blonde girl he had married, but maybe I was not so indiscreet and it was a few weeks later. He was in love with Grace Hegger—or perhaps in love with being in love with her. At any rate, I remember how gay we all were and that a silly, striped parasol and a broken-down bicycle from which all of us fell off were a part of it. Later they took a tidy little house in Port Washington, where I was a constant visitor. Lewis had become George Doran's editor by that time and an excellent one, too. He had written "Our Mr. Wrenn" and when *The Saturday Evening Post* had published enough of his stories he cut loose from jobs forever and wrote at home. He worked hard, long hours and was always infuriated when at suburban parties the men inferred that he was a lazy, lucky dog, who stayed at home with the women.

Then my own career started with a job at the brand-new publishing house of Harcourt, Brace & Company, to which Lewis had brought his latest book. Alfred Harcourt was always a good friend to him and a wise counselor, as he was to me. But he saw Lewis's talent, and neither of us was surprised when "Main Street" went over with such a bang that the echoes soon came rolling back from London. It seems to me that in those years I took friendship for granted, for I never thanked Lewis, who I am sure asked Alfred Harcourt to take me on, though neither of them ever admitted it. I had married and soon had two children to match Lewis's son Wells. Naturally I saw less of him, but our friendship continued and our adventures too.

Then there was that fabulous and disastrous and finally well publicized journey to Yale one Saturday morning, with Lewis carrying in his oldest overcoat an elegant box lined with satin in which was enshrouded the huge, solid-gold medal, the result

(*Continued on page* 36)

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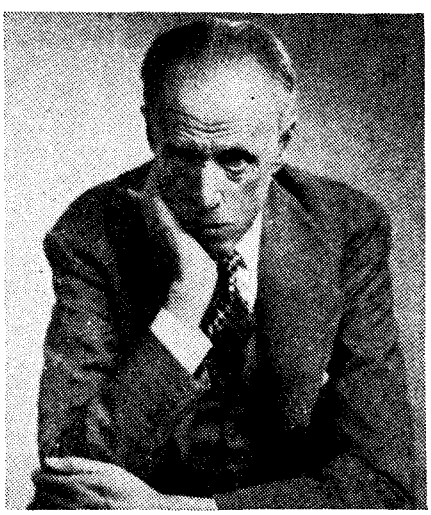
Lewis Album

". . . tall, lanky, red-headed . . ."



". . . he really cared."

". . . a highly complex personality, but his needs were essentially simple."

With Dorothy Thompson (the then Mrs. Lewis), "brilliant journalist and the only human being . . . who could talk Lewis down."

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Belles-Lettres.

Two novelists and a critic whose influence on contemporary American life and letters has been profound are represented among the books reviewed on this and the succeeding pages. The new vogue for F. Scott Fitzgerald, which began in earnest last fall with the publication of Budd Schulberg's novel "The Disenchanted" [SRL, *Oct. 28, 1950*], *is given added impetus by Arthur Mizener's scholarly biography "The Far Side of Paradise." Stephen Crane, the short-lived genius whose touch may be detected in the work of Ernest Hemingway and his countless imitators, is the subject of a new biography by John Berryman, the first since Thomas Beer's brilliant if not completely satisfactory study in 1923. Edmund Wilson has collected some of the essays he wrote during the Forties in an invaluable little volume, "Classics and Commercials."*

And the Other Side Was Hell

THE FAR SIDE OF PARADISE: A Biography of F. Scott Fitzgerald. By Arthur Mizener. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 362 pp. $4.

By MAXWELL GEISMAR

IT IS hard to write a definitive study of a public figure—even a writer—within the span of his own period. Perhaps the true biographies of most human beings are never written at all. The decisive factors in every temperament or career are those which are almost impossible to express if we can ever reach or understand them. Beneath the conventions of society there runs a sort of "secret history" of humanity which is usually unrecorded, perhaps unspoken, and often in the English tradition unthought of.

These limitations of public opinion should be mentioned here, but within them "The Far Side of Paradise," the first full-length biography of Scott Fitzgerald, is an intelligent, sensitive, and very often fascinating book. The story of Fitzgerald's career has a symbolism that often seems more interesting and imbued with larger dimensions of tragedy than much of Fitzgerald's work. Mr. Mizener is particularly good in his accounts of the Princeton years and of the publication of "This Side of Paradise," the abrupt and dazzling pinnacle of Fitzgerald's fame as the bard of the flapper and the child-historian of the Jazz Age.

He wrote to begin with to make enough money to marry Zelda, the wild beauty from Alabama. The early years of this marriage, the parties, the drinking, the extravagant antics to confirm their position as rebels and exotics, the underlying destructive element in the relationship of these two romantic egoists are described very well, too, and the basic story of this period in "The Beautiful and Damned" is supplemented with fresh and valuable material. Mr. Mizener stresses the social insecurity of Fitzgerald, the childhood on the fringes of wealth, the mixed family background with its Irish Catholic strain hardly acceptable to Fitzgerald himself, which led to a pathology of success and extravagance.

But there are other elements at once more ambiguous and perhaps more crucial in Fitzgerald's history. It is difficult to avoid the parental and oedipal relationships which are a recurrent theme in his work, the fantasy of being an orphan or the patterns of incestuous feeling which led after "The Great Gatsby" first to an uncompleted novel about matricide and then to "Tender Is the Night." The religious conflict was also strong and tied to Fitzgerald's sexuality and sense of sin. Mr. Mizener traces these themes but to my mind without adequate stress or any real interpretation in depth. The evaluation of Fitzgerald's work is again sound and well-informed but sometimes rather conventional.

During these years Fitzgerald's income was large for a serious artist, but his debts were fantastic; and meanwhile he had been drinking more heavily, working with less and less concentration, straining his talent when he was not absolutely dissipating it. The pay-off came at Antibes, when Zelda became ill and Fitzgerald himself approached a state of collapse in that vacation background of wealth, gaiety, and sophistication which they had always pursued. And here Fitzgerald broke with polite con-

THE AUTHOR: When Arthur Mizener was about eighteen and a sixth-former at the Hill School he read "This Side of Paradise," was at once enchanted and, further, jubilant that he had already picked Princeton for his college. Though he stood in awe during his freshman year of the fellow-student who dwelt in the room purportedly F. Scott Fitzgerald's he let the excitement fade and not until 1934 remembered the earlier fascination. Then reading "Tender Is the Night" he knew that he had to transmit his personal enthusiasm somehow. Professor Willard Thorp of Princeton provided an opportunity when he asked Mizener to do an essay on Fitzgerald for a book of biographies about Princetonians for the university's bicentenary. He called it "Scott Fitzgerald: Poet of Borrowed Time"—because he thinks the classic statement about Fitzgerald and the Twenties is FSF's own: "It was borrowed time anyhow—the whole upper tenth of a nation living with the insouciance of grand ducs and the casualness of chorus girls." He spent a magic evening when Edmund Wilson in New York made FSF brilliantly alive. "I was a committed man with a vocation after that," Mizener says; and there followed studies for *Harper's Bazaar* and *Partisan Review* and a short story inspired by Fitzgerald which won the 1946 *Kenyon Review* contest. In 1947 he was awarded a Houghton Mifflin Fellowship for a full-length biography. He followed the beam to the places figuring in FSF's life and into the confidence of those who had known him best. He speaks with rather wondering gratitude of the consideration and time these people gave him—but their interest seems no matter for wonder: Arthur Mizener is responsive and generous himself. His quick humor and unjaded interest establish immediate rapport; those qualities have made him the highly successful English teacher he is—formerly at Yale and Wells College, now at Carleton College in Minnesota. With his wife and child, his profession, and his consuming interest he seems the authentic portrait of an integrated, happy man. Perhaps that is why he brings such discriminating compassion to this portrait of despair. —K. S.

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ventions when he dealt, in an extreme of conscience and desperation, with the material of his own crack-up and the approach to the "dark maw of violence." Mr. Mizener uses this material more freely, and the climax of the biography is moving and tragic.

For the first time, in poverty, ill-health, and solitude, Fitzgerald found himself becoming "only a writer" because that was all he was left with. It was too late in a way; his physical organism was no longer adequate to the moral demands. Yet this was the period of his most mature values and sharpest insights which formed the background for "The Last Tycoon." He could really say, as his first hero, Amory Blaine, had said quite arrogantly, that at least he understood himself, and now he could speak, in his famous phrase, "with the authority of failure."

"If I knew anything I'd be the best writer in America," he wrote in a desperate letter to Maxwell Perkins, and he was quite right. A curious sort of infantile narcissism had always intervened between the earlier novelist and any intimate sense of people or social environment, while the books based on his own temperamental conflicts are often inchoate or disorganized. His achievement is as a chronicler of atmosphere and manners, and his position is among the artists of sensibility. Meanwhile this biography, along with Budd Schulberg's recent novel, "The Disenchanted," will do much to revive an interest in his work, and forms a valuable contemporary record of his life.

Maxwell Geismar, the author of "Writers in Crisis" and "The Last of the Provincials," is now working on the third volume in his history of the American novelists.

Nothing Is Always Still

By Eric Wilson Barker

AND stones can fly like trees.
Although they seem so still,
In wind they move through waves
That move a standing hill

Whose trees are light as clouds
To float away like weed
As limpet to its rock
Till by waved water freed,

With leaves outspread to flow
Through water-streams like wind
Whose miracle it is
Leaves not a stone behind,

But haired with floods of leaves,
Makes haystack of a hill
Pours mountains past our eyes
And leaves us standing still.

Great Stylist

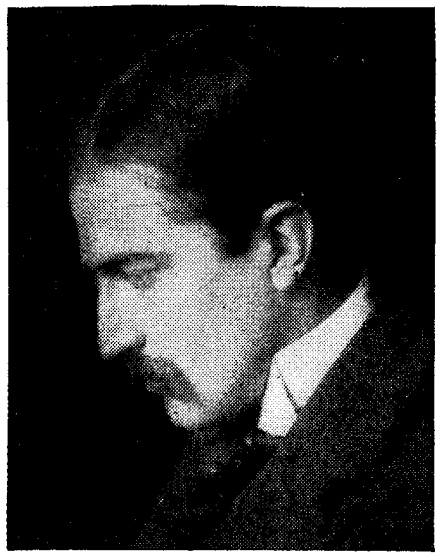
STEPHEN CRANE. By John Berryman. New York: William Sloane Assoc. 347 pp. $3.75.

By Robert E. Spiller

THE INCLUSION of Stephen Crane in the new American Men of Letters Series emphasizes the place that Carl Van Doren assigned to the author of "The Red Badge of Courage" back in the Twenties: "He is as timeless as any novelist in English. Modern American literature began with him." And the choice of the young American poet John Berryman to write a critical biography of the master has produced a sensitive, enthusiastic, and much needed reappraisal, even though Mr. Berryman has somewhat confused his own discovery of Crane with a supposed but unfounded previous neglect by the critical world at large. His bibliography is conspicuous for its neglect of the literary historians, although he is correct in pointing out that up to now the impressionistic method of criticism has not been applied to this pioneer in American impressionistic fiction.

Although authorization from T. S. Eliot comes late in Mr. Berryman's volume it provides the clue to his method of defining three stages in the development of poetry, the third of which is "our stage" in which "the reader or listener may become as nearly indifferent to the subject matter as the primitive listener was to the style." Crane, thinks Mr. Berryman, "is one of the great stylists of the language" and his style "differs radically from both the tradition of English prose and from its modification in American prose." The weakness of the previous biographer of Crane, Thomas Beer, he points out, is that his account is "a study of the times, in strong light, and across that light moves an inconspicuous figure called Stephen Crane."

When therefore Mr. Berryman surveys with horror the stupidity of his predecessors and promises sensational revelations he is not thinking of new biographical facts or of new understanding of the thought of Stephen Crane or of his place in the intellectual pattern of his times. The tradition of symbolist prose from Browne to Melville might provide at least a shadowy past for the uniqueness of Crane's style if there were time to explore it, and the fact that Crane lived and talked with painters and in several of his stories identified himself with a fictional painter might offer the scholar more suggestive connections with French impressionism than the summary "opinion": "He owes nothing whatever, apparently, to painting."



—*Newark Public Library.*

Stephen Crane—"modern American literature began with him."

Mr. Berryman adds very little to our knowledge as derived from the account of Thomas Beer and a handful of articles and letters published since. Such episodes in Crane's life as his schooling and his last days at Brede are made more specific by material published since Beer wrote in 1923, and the women in his life are identified more exactly; but the total portrait is very little altered and Crane's place in literary history is obscured rather than clarified by the attempt to divorce him from the literary movements of his time. This is not therefore the careful biography that the critics of Beer have long called for. It is rather, like Beer's, an essay in criticism written in a biographical frame, and it only supplements Beer.

Mr. Berryman makes two new and important points, one in each of his concluding chapters. He demonstrates that Crane's art, a primitive impressionism, is ironic and appears in two stages: the "unstyle" of the poetry and the studied style of the prose. And he attributes Crane's system of symbolism, by Freudian analysis, to two childhood experiences and traces back, using the poetry and prose in lieu of free association, to a rivalry against his father and to unacknowledged oedipal substitutions in life and art. Let us say that Mr. Berryman makes good his promise and gives us full measure when he finally comes to his moment of revelation. His probing of the art and soul of Stephen Crane is thorough and must be reckoned with. The fear which Beer and others have always stressed as central in Crane's mind is here provided with sources in the subconscious and with specific results in art. Stephen Crane is now a conspicuous figure moving across a light that comes from nowhere.

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Shakespeareana—Plus

THE MYSTERY OF HAMLET, KING OF DENMARK or What We Will. By Percy MacKaye. New York: Bond Wheelwright. 675 *pp.* $6.50.

By Henry W. Wells

IN APRIL and May of last year at the enterprising playhouse in Pasadena, California, during a memorable dramatic festival a sequence of four plays, "The Mystery of Hamlet King of Denmark," by Percy MacKaye, was successfully performed. The production was based upon a somewhat longer text than the acting version. It is this complete text which is now printed as a poetical drama or tetralogy. The action extends from the birth of Prince Hamlet to the first act of Shakespeare's work, brief passages from which are used to link the modern play more firmly to its parent drama. Almost all the chief characters are taken from Shakespeare's drama. Thus we have Yorick the Jester, only mentioned by Shakespeare, though he plays an important part in MacKaye's dramatic poem.

It will at once be seen that MacKaye's project is—to use an Elizabethan expression—both bold and not so bold. It is admittedly conservative in that it leans heavily upon the old play. But it is ambitious in its elaboration of much that Shakespeare merely hints; it is audacious in its prolonged and complicated execution, in its studied symbolism, and in the willingness of its author to place his own lines in close proximity to Shakespeare's. Although there are sure to be a few skeptics, in the opinion of the present reviewer the boldness fully justifies itself.

Percy MacKaye is well known as a poet and dramatist whose chief activities have hitherto been in his remarkably productive younger years, as much as three or four decades ago. He possessed then and still does possess keen feeling for the theatre, which he inherits from his father, Steele MacKaye, one of the most enterprising figures in the entire history of the American stage. The present play shows Percy MacKaye's insight for the theatrical and contains by far the best poetry that he has as yet written. Some scenes possess really great power, revealing an intuitive sense for the Hamlet myth. One does not in the least feel that MacKaye rashly trespasses upon Shakespearean territory or exposes himself to charges of bad taste or illusions of classical grandeur. He has grandeur of his own.

The play is not merely a lively contribution to Shakespeareana. As befits any work based upon a sound interpretation of Hamlet, it is also a metaphysical poem. MacKaye rises to the dignity of his theme. His high seriousness is supported by unmistakable powers to deal with generalized concepts and with the heroic emotions that bind together humanity in time and make the existence of classics a reality. Time is actually the chief actor in MacKaye's ironic drama of ideas. His subject matter, following Shakespeare, strongly encourages this outlook; all events are viewed simultaneously on several levels of time, so that the reader is continually aware of a man's age confronted by his youth, his youth by his age.

Finally, the undeniably ambitious project justifies itself by methods and ideas distinctly modern; this is actually the most up to date of MacKaye's works. Even his folklore is in fashion. His treatment of war and peace, the individual and the state, shows—quite beside the question of solutions—the sensitivity of a poet to the chief problems of his society. Hamlet's father clad in full armor becomes, even as a ruler, a symbol of the individual crushed by the state, whereas the young Hamlet, as might be supposed, is an heroic symbol for the sacred claims of the individual in a world threatened by statism. Even the claims of modern internationalism are eloquently injected into this outwardly retrospective work. The older Hamlet exclaims:

'T is the word of statehood, utter'd
From kingdom unto kingdom down the ages
By them, to them, who dream it is themselves
Who speak it. So shall it be echoed on
Till there be no more states, but only
—Man.

This is a book to ponder. It is not light reading; but it constitutes a major and rewarding contribution to poetic drama.

Henry W. Wells is a member of the English Department of Columbia University. He is the author of "Introduction to Emily Dickinson," "Elizabethan and Jacobean Playwrights," and other books.

A Critic's Chronicle

CLASSICS AND COMMERCIALS. By Edmund Wilson. New York: Farrar, Straus & Young. 438 *pp.* $5.

By William Barrett

IN THE subtitle Edmund Wilson gives to this collection of critical articles, "A Literary Chronicle of the Forties," we have a remarkable and rather ironical indication of the book's excellence. If we knew no other literary production of the decade and were to reflect that this book is after all only a specimen of literary journalism, compiled mainly from weekly articles in *The New Yorker*, we might very easily rush to the conclusion that the period that can show such journalism must be a very distinguished one indeed. The trouble with any such inference is that Edmund Wilson by this time stands pretty much alone, both as literary journalist and critic, and in this solitary eminence in which he carries on his trade he has become representative of a type of man of letters that was on its way to becoming extinct during the decade the book is supposed to chronicle.

Wilson has written more ambitious essays than can be found here, but none of his previous books affords more vivid illustration of his peculiar virtue as a critic: the ability to move easily in the world of books and men, and in ranging widely from the great classics to the popular pot-boilers to communicate always the sense of literature as a continuing and living activity that has to do with the whole life of man and society on this earth. By this time this has become a very rare quality in our criticism, something that sets Wilson apart from the academic criticism that became the reigning mode in our literary quarterlies during the Forties. The latter, technical to the point of boredom and well beyond the point of diminishing returns, has become a dry and desiccated performance in which literature begins definitely to reek of the museum.

Two articles in this collection deal with the great English critic and scholar George Saintsbury. This sympathy is entirely natural: though his mind has passed through the modern disciplines of Marx and Freud Wilson remains at bottom an old-fashioned humanistic critic like Saintsbury. Along with Saintsbury's wide reading and enormous appetite for literature Wilson has the same capacity for forthright and energetic taste. Both work from a fundamental conception of the critic as a man of letters, rather than as a scientist of the literary work—

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the illusion that condemns a good many of our academic critics to dulness. Wilson, however, brings life and letters much closer together than a critic like Saintsbury: one of the very best pieces in this book, for example, is an essay on Emily Post, a beautiful exercise of Wilson's social imagination.

Since the tastes are individual, one naturally disagrees with some of them here. The "Dissenting Opinion on Franz Kafka," something of a bombshell among the avant garde when it appeared a few years ago in *The New Yorker*, was a necessary corrective to the Kafka cult, but it now looks a little too severe in its condemnation of Kafka's failure. Kafka's life is surely the record of a failure, and it is absurd to place him beside a novelist like Dostoievsky, as the cult has done, or to claim for him a rank beside his contemporaries Proust and Joyce. Nevertheless, Kafka's work, fragmentary and incomplete as it is, does have a stark and monumental strength that ruins often have, and he would not have caught on among so many younger writers if his work did not have the extraordinary power to jolt the imagination.

What was happening to literature during the Forties? Wilson's "chronicle" is embedded in review after review of best sellers, but he also provides a summarizing essay, "Thoughts on Being Bibliographed," which puts together the details of the picture. During the Thirties and Forties, Wilson tells us, the two chief menaces to American literary talent became Hollywood and Henry Luce, organizations that absorbed writers into a kind of collective anonymity. The writers who did not go after the big money wound up in the academy, where they were absorbed into another kind of corporate existence, obstructive in its own way to the practice of literature. All this, Wilson notes, has brought about an interruption in the "American Renaissance" in literature that began in the Teens and Twenties. But he merely describes the course of the disease to date, offers no prognosis and no panacea. It is a sign of his own great merit that he himself has survived the wear and tear of these periods, stubbornly resisting all encroachments on his identity as a writer.

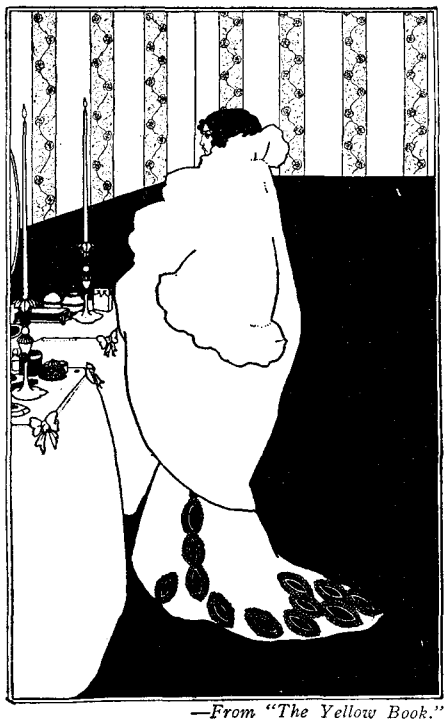
This particular essay and the book as a whole suggest the idea of the great work for which all of Wilson's career hitherto has been a preparation: a literary history of his time, in which all his gifts for historical narrative, never quite realized in his fiction, might be brought into full cooperation with his great critical intelligence and taste. It would be a pity if we never had this work from his hands.

Belles-Lettres Notes

WORDSWORTH: A Tribute. By George Mallaby. Macmillan. $1.50. In the past year, the centenary of Wordsworth's death, a great many books about him have appeared. Mr. Mallaby's book is brief, neat, and well turned; he writes from the viewpoint of the literate amateur who wishes to pay tribute to Wordsworth by showing how much the poet has given him in spiritual sustenance and esthetic delight. As he works his way through the important poems, explaining and "appreciating," he is genuinely persuasive. A former schoolmaster (and now secretary general of the European Joint Planning Staff), he sometimes sounds as though he were confronting a roomful of earnest boys and trying to "sell them" Wordsworth; but that uncomfortably urgent tone of style is, fortunately, not long-lasting. And why, alas, must he denigrate the eighteenth century to praise the romantics! That was what he was taught as a schoolboy, when Matthew Arnold's pronouncements on poetry were gospel. The Augustan and the romantic poets were artists after their own individual and different fashions; and it is not necessary to put them on opposite ends of a seesaw.

A BIOGRAPHER'S NOTEBOOK. By Hector Bolitho. Macmillan. $3.50. Most of this slight volume is not, unfortunately, a notebook but only a display of biographical remnants, several in the form of raw letters. The longest section consists of a series written during the last four years of her life by Queen Marie of Roumania to an American friend she had never met. Although intended as the crown jewel of the book, these letters hardly seem worth printing, for they are verbose, sententious, banal, sentimental, and so filled with self-pity that they hardly elicit the reader's sympathy when their writer had so much for herself. The rest of the book is more rewarding. It includes brief biographical sketches of young King Hussein and of the Prince Consort's mother, and three short series of letters: of an English Quaker family, of a companion to Victoria's eldest son, and the witty and informative ones of Mowbray Morris, the Victorian journalist.

The curious thing about Mr. Bolitho's notebook is that he fails to see who his best subject is—himself. Two pieces in his book show this. His diary of a trip to Rumania is except for his fatuous admiration for HRH lively and interesting; but the brightest piece is his diary of a visit to King Abdullah. Here, where he is a Jeeves wandering through the Arabian Nights, he is an acute observer, equipped with humor, intelligence, and perception. Unlike some of his biographical subjects he knows his limitations and operates very amusingly within them. If he ever produces a real biographer's notebook it will be worth reading.



—*From "The Yellow Book."*

"La Dame aux Camélias," by Beardsley.

THE YELLOW BOOK: A Selection. Compiled by Norman Denny. Viking. $3.75. When *The Yellow Book* appeared as a London quarterly in the 1890's its naughtiness struck Victorian readers as wicked; today, to judge from this excellent selection, its naughtiness is mild indeed. But it offers us instead different and varied pleasures. Mr. Denny has chosen what he considers a representative cross-section of the magazine's stories, essays, poetry, and art and has prefaced them with a neat and amusing note. To convey the flavor of the magazine the Bodley Head, its original publishers, have produced it with the same squat format, yellow covers, and even some of the text from original plates. It is a handsome book both in its own right and as an authentic period piece.

The selections whose attractiveness is merely their nostalgic perfume may be enjoyed in passing; there is more substantial writing besides. There are stories by Henry James, George Gissing, Arnold Bennett, Ernest Dowson, John Buchan; essays by Max Beerbohm, Richard Le Gallienne, and an uproarious criticism of journalistic book reviewing by the editor, Henry Harland. The poetry is its weakest department and the art its most var-

(*Continued on page* 39)

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Fiction. *With the outlook for the human race bleak and seemingly insoluble, it is small wonder that many novelists are looking to distant and imagined lands for their settings. Like James Ramsey Ullman, whose "River of the Sun" was reviewed here last week, H. E. Bates turns to a faraway place, Kashmir, for the locale of "The Scarlet Sword." Another escapist, Rumer Godden, has frankly borrowed the idea and characters of Shakespeare's "The Tempest" for "A Breath of Air." . . . Meanwhile some young writers still look back to their World War II experiences. Many critics have been declaring that this theme is now exhausted, but they may be proved wrong by such works as M. R. Kadish's "Point of Honor" and James Jones's "From Here to Eternity"; the latter is already stirring wide interest in the book world a month ahead of its publication.*

Prospero in Modern Dress

A BREATH OF AIR. By Rumer Godden. New York: The Viking Press. 280 pp. $3.

By Ben Ray Redman

IN THIS troubled age of ours, when the world is more than ever too much with us, many readers are sure to find Mr. van Loomis's island—the scene of Rumer Godden's modern version of "The Tempest"—a most attractive place. Known to its natives as Manoa but renamed Terraqueous by its distinguished purchaser, this jewel lies in a reach of the Indian Ocean that is not crossed by steamer lanes; and the senses of its inhabitants have never been assaulted by the smell of petrol, by motion pictures, or by radio's incessant voice. Here are men and women who are strangers to wars and rumors of war, to atom bombs and economic crises, fifth columns and campaign oratory, mass production and mass consumption, gadgets and money.

Under Mr. van Loomis's benignant despotism and efficient direction these people have richly realized the potentialities of their self-sufficient island, while retaining their ancient heritage of belief, custom, and ritual. Having all that they need for a contented life they do not even know how to desire more than they have. Of course Filipino, the clever house boy, is an exception, and, as his master says, there is no stopping the Filipinos of this world. But I am speaking of Terraqueous as it was when it still lay beneath the spell of its modern Prospero; when the potency of his magic was still unquestioned; when Charis was growing to maturity, and Mr. van Loomis had not yet realized that there are limits to a father's ability to provide for a daughter's happiness.

Actually the island's golden age is ending just as Miss Godden's story begins. At that very instant the little empire is threatened from within by the unrest that has begun to plague Charis and Filipino and from without by the approach of Doubleday Valentine's plane, storm-driven off course.

The corruption of Filipino had begun when Charis taught him to read, for the art of reading made him free of a stack of old magazines, which revealed to him the wonders of what we are content to call civilization. His mind became "a shimmering maze of American advertisements, than which nothing can more subtly fill the mind; it was a maze of typewriters and newsprint, of race horses and refrigerators; petrol and brown and white shoes. . . ." He had also discovered and devoutly swallowed the fiery liquor of Tom Paine's "Rights of Man."

As for Charis, her "lot on the island was queenly, but it was not enviable; if she was near-royalty, she was very lonely." Not when she was a child, for no childhood could have been happier. But there came a time when her nurse's devoted care, her pets and her pony, her father's skilful teaching of all the subjects he knew so well, and the adulation of servants and islanders were not enough. There came a year when with the arrival of "the courtship month" she faced the fact that there was no young man on Terraqueous who could aspire to love her. There was one young man who was not a native; but he was Mario—and Mario was the island's Caliban.

Into this setting and situation flies Valentine with his companion and mechanic, McGinty. Valentine, at the age of thirty, is an international celebrity who has won fame as playwright, producer, actor, and film director. Now he is on his way from Australia to England, where he is scheduled to put a new play into production. And McGinty? Well, he could hardly be described better than in Mr. van Loomis's words: "The world today is peopled with McGintys. . . . McGinty is the mob. The image of the mob." He is all that Filipino foolishly dreams of being. He is also obstinate, resourceful, and determined that he and Valentine shall escape from Terraqueous. Mr. van Loomis on the other hand is determined that they shall not leave until certain matters have been arranged to his satisfaction. And Mr. van Loomis is also resourceful.

Miss Godden's novel, then, is not only a love story; it is also a drama of contrast and conflict, in which two cultures meet—two philosophies of life—and in which youth is at odds with age. But it is a sprightly drama, however mean and drab the picture that it presents of our Western civilization; a drama that gives us sad truths camouflaged in comedy's bright motley. Writing to entertain, Miss Godden succeeds by virtue of a skill that conceals effort. Always in easy command of her material she surpasses her average excellence in a few descriptions of scene and action: for example in her account of how Mr. van Loomis and his native helpers hide Valentine's plane behind the waterfall in the marine cave. Yet she has failed, I think, to realize fully the possibilities inherent in the relationship of her twentieth-century Miranda and Ferdinand; she has only lightly sketched the interplay of emotion and thought between the girl who knows much in theory but almost nothing by experience, and the sophisticated man whose knowledge and experience, wide though they are, have never before included a girl like Charis. As a result a reader may well feel that Miss Godden has left some promises unfulfilled, that she has been rather less successful with her hero and heroine than with her supporting cast, and that "A Breath of Air" could have been a richer, fuller book. But it seems rude to express such feelings when it is as it stands so enjoyable.

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That Monotonous Game

POINT OF HONOR. By M. R. Kadish. New York: Random House. 311 *pp.* $3.

By John Brooks

OVER the past five years the "war novel" has become one of the most familiar literary genres in this country. It has developed a set of its own conventions within the broader conventions of the novel proper. It even has its fashions; about three years ago it was down on officers, now it tends to be kind to them. Therefore perhaps the greatest service a reviewer can render in speaking of a new war novel is to assume an audience of war novel aficionados and simply state the setting, the method used, the deviations from the norm, very much as one does in reviewing another well established genre, the detective story—though by this is meant no slight to the more serious purpose of the war novel.

In "Point of Honor," then, the setting is Italy, and the action follows a battery of artillerymen equipped with eight-inch howitzers from the Rapido to a point far north of Rome, during the winter, spring, and summer of 1944. The narrative focuses particularly on one gun and its crew; there is a good deal of detail about the loading and firing of this gun and the air and ground observation of the shelling, which is interesting in the way all military tactics are.

M. R. Kadish uses the familiar method of picking his characters from various ranks in the army hierarchy and throwing together a group of enlisted men who represent various social, political, and religious points of view. The characters to whom most space is devoted are a tough and competent colonel, rather sympathetically treated; a liberal-minded lieutenant unable to give a decisive order and too preoccupied with humanitarian matters to be a good military man; and a competent sergeant who has deep guilt feelings about what is involved in his competence. Besides the sergeant, the enlisted man most closely observed is a refugee German Jew who has previously been in the Wehrmacht.

M. R. Kadish—"a literary exercise."

The warfare of these men against the enemy, each other, and themselves makes up the story, which is featured by many incidents and attitudes we have seen before: the crack-up of a man under battle strain; the ironical advancement of an officer for the very action in which he has shown his cowardice; and the chauvinistic Americanism of the less enlightened characters. The most trenchant incident is the one that closes the book, in which the guilt-stricken sergeant risks court-martial to protect an Italian family from two French Arabs who seem bent on murdering the mother and raping the daughter.

Well and good; but what about "Point of Honor" as a novel, rather than as a war novel? Unless one accepts the dubious proposition that war as it was fought between 1941 and 1945 is the archetypical modern situation, the strict war novel of this kind, after its first impact of factual revelation, would seem to be of limited interest, perhaps chiefly of value as a literary exercise for new writers. This is a very dogmatic statement, and Mr. Kadish, who like any serious writer knows that he has written an original, has a perfect right to be furious at it. Nevertheless, an army at war as such certainly presents a novelist with a paucity of material; there is the situation of military rank and injustice, the situation of sexual and emotional privation, the situation of death and fear of death or injury—and that is about it. (I hasten to make an exception of books of broader scope that use the war as a back drop, such as John Horne Burns's "The Gallery," a novel into which so much skill and passion went that tragedy seems to hang like a palpable thing over its scenes.)

Judged as an exercise "Point of Honor" shows a good talent for narrative, a certain confusion in the delineation of character, and best of all an occasional gentle impressionistic bit of description that reminded this reader of a war novel over fifty years old, "The Red Badge of Courage." An artilleryman is brooding beside his gun during a barrage: "Snubbing him, aiming at the empty sky, the tube blasts. . . . They should stop playing this monotonous game."

—*Bettmann Archive.*

Stendhal—"to 'the happy few.'"

Lucien Leuwen Again

THE TELEGRAPH. By Stendhal. Translated by Louise Varèse. New York: New Directions. 415 *pp.* $3.50.

By Morris Bishop

STENDHAL dedicated his work to "the happy few," and this reviewer must confess that he is one of the unhappy many. For him Stendhal wrote one great novel, one very good one, and much pretentious dull prose redeemed by an occasional brilliant chapter, paragraph, or phrase.

The happy few, who fortunately have already stopped reading this review, treasure every word of the master and will at once buy a copy of "The Telegraph." The unhappy many can continue to do without.

The book is the second part of "Lucien Leuwen"; the first part was published in 1950 under the title of "The Green Huntsman." "The Telegraph" describes Lucien's adventures in the political, financial, and social world of Paris in the early years of Louis-Philippe's reign. The hero, an idealized Stendhal, immeasurably superior to all his masters, regards with mocking contempt the venality, inhumanity, and moral baseness of society under the bourgeois king.

The book is described on the jacket as "an incomparable historical portrait of an age." One may note however that except for one brief visit to Paris Stendhal was in Italy from the accession of Louis-Philippe until work on the book was abandoned in 1835. All Stendhal's information about the regime he had from newspapers, letters, and his imagination. Though Louis-Philippe's government was certainly corrupt and repressive, Stendhal's picture of the rulers as driveling imbeciles is quite incredible. Thiers, Guizot, Casimir Périer were at least

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men of intelligence and decision. Thiers was a famous orator, and all three could write very respectably. Stendhal's rulers are mere caricatures. If one wants an incomparable historical portrait of the age one had better read Balzac.

Perhaps, then, we should regard the book as political satire and enjoy it as such. But even as satire it seems to this unsympathetic reporter unsuccessful. In the first place it assumes in the reader an intimate knowledge of the characters, events, and background of the period, beyond the reach even of the modern Frenchman. The editor has had to supply twenty-seven pages of notes, which this reader found the most interesting part of the book. In the second place the tone wavers between realism and burlesque, and the mockery is crude and not very funny. Stendhal abuses the device of reversing moral qualifications for ironic effect, *e.g.*: "Lucien still had the bad habit and extreme imprudence of being natural in moments of intimacy." This is really too easy.

Upon this reader, at least, Stendhal fails to impose either the illusion of reality or the illusion of mockery, which is the revelation of folly by wisdom. What he has done is to give us a series of portraits, some sharp and some blurred, and a series of episodes, some of them, especially the account of the elections in Caen, splendid. He has not given us either a valid reportage or a coherent novel.

We cannot blame him. The book is unfinished and incomplete. A number of crucial passages are left blank in the original manuscript, with notes by Stendhal that he would fill them in when he should feel in the mood. No wonder he fails to sustain the reader's illusion. After Stendhal's death the ms. was sent to Prosper Mérimée. "Nothing to be done with this," said Mérimée, who was not one of the happy few.

The translation is faithful and usually excellent, though the style has a certain literary primness. It is amusing to read of the hard-bitten politicians calling each other jackanapeses, chatterboxes, and rapscallions.

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 878)

CATHERINE D. BOWEN:
JOHN ADAMS [AND THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION]

"The bells rang," . . . wrote Abigail to her husband in Philadelphia, that July night of the day the Declaration was proclaimed from the State House balcony in Boston. "Thus ends the royal authority in this State, and all the people shall say 'Amen'."

Violence and Death in Kashmir

H. E. Bates—"nowhere a key to meaning."

THE SCARLET SWORD. By H. E. Bates. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 282 pp. $3.

By NATHAN L. ROTHMAN

UPON the level of sheer reporting H. E. Bates does a brilliant job. Much of his tale of the descent of the Moslems upon a Catholic mission in Kashmir depends on his fine and perceptive recording of detail: the minutiae of life in the mission just before and just after the attack; the characters of the two priests, the nurses, the Hindu women, the colonel, the war correspondent; the impact upon these of violence and death; the ways in which the climate of their lives is altered, as by a thunderclap. There is the suggestion everywhere of the chosen—or the choosing—perceptions of a poetic intelligence. So that upon this level alone it is easy to cite "The Scarlet Sword" as a book of constant freshness and literary quality. There is at least one person in it—Father Simpson—whose growth and stirring under pressure offer a communicable experience to the reader. (Not quite as much can be said of the other focal character, Crane, the war correspondent.)

Yet I am less impressed with the novel than I would have been if Mr. Bates had furnished somewhere in it some frame of reference for these shocking events. A band of Pathans and Afridis burst upon the scene like mad Martians dropped out of the sky, and what ensues can be described only as havoc. Murder, beating, rape, and massacre follow one another too swiftly to be intelligently realized by the shocked inhabitants of the mission: the two priests, the British colonel and his wife, the Hindus who have come here for shelter ahead of the storm, the war correspondent, the nurses on duty. They are engulfed, all of them, exactly as though a tidal wave had swept in upon the land, and each struggles in single isolation to keep breath in his or her nostrils. The Hindus may know what is happening, but they keep silence. The young colonel walks through, up to the moment of his death, with the unhesitating and incurious confidence of the Mr. Britling he is. Crane, the correspondent, operates always with the cynical calm that is made to seem a natural attribute of his trade; he makes the split-second decisions and has the split-second luck of the hero of fiction, with even time and libido enough for a compelling love affair amidst the carnage. Only Father Simpson it seems to me is really touched by these horrors, deeper than flesh-deep. He does experience more than fear for his skin, and it is his sufferings which hold whatever meaning the book may possess. And yet even he feels rather than understands.

Nobody in the story seems to know what is going on or why; nowhere in it does Mr. Bates offer a key to the meaning of this episode. Any reader will have been aware of the terrible riots that split India upon the threshold of her independence. It would not seem possible to write a novel of just that period without placing it somewhere within the framework of national events, without getting into it some of the political struggle (and its significance) which is the true source of the action. It is baffling to find this missing from Mr. Bates's book. Without it, the bloody episode is quite meaningless. A whole dimension is missing. Thus, for the recording of the events of a week in Kashmir Mr. Bates must be rated high indeed; for background and meaning: incomplete.

Fiction Notes

POUND FOOLISH. By Robert Molloy. Lippincott. $3. Mr. Molloy has an admirable gift for sustained comedy. He has peopled this novel, like its predecessor "Pride's Way," with a multitude of odd but always believable characters, who will remain in the reader's memory when the protagonists of more pretentious stories are forgotten. He sees the humor inherent in their absorption in their own small affairs and has set it down

(*Continued on page* 33)

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Zola: Truth Despite Science

A Classic Revalued—XVII

MARCEL AYMÉ

FOR a long time now people in France who pride themselves on being well-bred or well-educated or simply on having good taste have forgone the reading of the works of Emile Zola, whom they consider to be a clumsy, unsophisticated victim of the doctrinaire spirit of the nineteenth century. The critics, whose business it is to be intelligent and who therefore take pains to give the impression of being so, feel obliged to speak of Emile Zola and of the naturalistic school in general with amused contempt only, as they would of the furniture and architecture of the 1900 period—but with less indulgence. Judging from their writings you would easily take the author of "Les Rougon-Macquart" to be a half-baked, bearded pedant who managed to be recognized as a writer and thinker only because of the undeniable bad taste of his period. They do not essentially reproach him for his crudities of situations and language; on these counts he has been left far behind during the past twenty years. But they do reproach him for his almost religious attitude towards science and his pretense of a scientific method where it would seem unwarranted.

Those scientific methods by which Zola claimed to construct his works of fiction laid him wide open to reproach. But he went about it with such simplicity and good faith that his errors are as if extrinsic to the work and in no way alter its true value. (This may not be so for the body of his work, but it certainly is for the greater part of the novels.) It is even a touching thing, this confidence accorded to scientific method by one of the most instinctive of all writers. Piling up notes and documentation probably caused this great toiler to consume more time than was necessary in the writing of his novels, particularly since they proved to be of little use and only engendered portions that are dry and dead.

But these dead portions—descriptions more or less technical, considerations and explanations displaying a smattering of knowledge in philosophy, economics, sociology, and medicine—are but scraps and residue. They must not be allowed to make us forget what is alive and still valid in that imposing fresco of an epoch which is comprised in the twenty volumes of "Les Rougon-Macquart." Zola did not have the detachment that would seem to be required for the use of scientific method in the constructing of a work of fiction. On the contrary he had the sort of sensibility and intuition which permitted Balzac to cleave through certain errors of information and arrive at truth. So strong is Zola's sense of life and his ability to recreate it that life gushes forth in his books despite all his cumbrous pretense of a clinical approach. In "Les Rougon-Macquart," "the Natural and Social History of a Family during the Second Empire," he goes to great pains to explain how the laws of heredity govern the individuals springing from the same stock and living in different environments. Such an attempt was, to say the least, premature, as very little in this field is scientifically known even today. There were, then, all kinds of reasons why his effort at scientific explanation should meet with complete defeat. But Zola depicted the individuals and their respective environments with great felicity and truthfulness, giving them a social significance simply through his power of evocation—a result he was unable to achieve for the work as a whole, with all his scientific apparatus.

IN Emile Zola there is a poetry which counts for very little in the eyes of the critics, since by its very nature it escapes analysis and consequently does not lend itself to critical elaborations. This poetry confers upon the characters, situations, and social environments an amplitude, an intensity, and color that give to Zola's work its epic quality. His heroes seem to be larger than life; the misery of mankind, mankind's depravities and crimes are represented with a zeal

—Bettmann Archive.

Zola and his Nana, by Forain—"life gushes forth."

In Print

THAT critical devaluation of Zola noted by M. Aymé in the adjoining article is reflected in publishers' current lists. Of the thirty-odd volumes constituting Zola's life work only three are presently available from American publishers:

"L'Assommoir" (1878) — Knopf ($2.50).

"Nana" (1880)—Pocket Books (25¢); Garden City ($1); World ($1); Modern Library ($1.25); Heritage ($5).

"Germinal" (1885)—Everyman's Library, Dutton (95¢); Knopf ($2.50); Heritage ($5).

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which too often carries him beyond the bounds of probability. His enemies reproach him for just this: that he, a realistic, even didactic novelist, allowed himself to indulge in exaggerations that distort truth.

But is this criticism valid? I think not.

Last year an old woman of Montmartre told me very simply, without the least adornment of literature, the story of her existence as a young wife in about the year 1890, when she was twenty. There was her job: making trimmings and accessories for the dressmaking trade, eleven hours a day at twenty-five centimes the hour and a distance of about three miles to cover afoot, going to and from work. There was her husband, who left home at five o'clock in the morning to go to the factory at St.-Denis, also on foot, naturally. Returning home exhausted at about nine o'clock at night he usually stopped in for a drink at a nearby café where she had to go and find him more than once. She described the fights she had to sustain against him at the café, battles which were continued at home to the accompaniment of hurled plates and broken chairs, while their child howled with fear. Finally, she told how her husband had hung himself, worn out and in despair, leaving her alone to bring up a child of ten. She spoke in a small, calm voice, a colorless voice which at times betrayed a note of pride at the memory of such great misery, and her half-blind eyes, dimmed by many long hard tasks, looked at me, unseeing. More moved than I would have been at the recital of an act of heroism, I thought quite naturally of Zola, of "L'Assommoir" and of "Germinal," those two epics of working-class suffering, which when they first appeared were condemned by the distinguished critics (they were almost all distinguished) as being biased and exaggerated. And ever since, when I meet that old woman in a street of Montmartre, I never fail to think of Zola, who often showed bad taste and naïveté, but whose genius had sufficient power and tenderness to reveal to everyone the conditions of existence for the truly condemned and lost, *"les damnés de la Terre."*

The above was translated by Herma Briffault. Marcel Aymé is a regular contributor to French literary periodicals and a popular novelist on both sides of the Atlantic. His latest book published here is "The Barkeep of Blémont." This is the seventeenth of a series of literary revaluations that SRL *is presenting in conjunction with NBC and five universities participating in the "University of the Air."*

F.D.R. *So firm is the hold of Abraham Lincoln upon the hearts of the American people that for nearly a decade a Chicago bookstore specializing in volumes about his life and times has been a highly profitable enterprise. But Franklin Delano Roosevelt, who died less than six years ago, is already almost as great a folk hero, and there is now an establishment in Pasadena, California, dedicated to satisfying the literary needs of his following. The albums of Lincoln pictures, compendiums of Lincoln anecdotes and sage sayings, and collections of Lincoln letters and public papers that have long been staples of the publishing world now have their counterparts in Roosevelt albums, compendiums, and collections. John T. Winterich and Ernest K. Lindley review five of the books from among the many in this season's harvest on this and the following page.*

Rooseveltana Refresher Course

FDR: A PICTORIAL BIOGRAPHY. By Stefan Lorant. New York: Simon & Schuster. 160 *pp. Paper,* $1.50. *Clothbound,* $3.95.

THE HOUSE AT HYDE PARK. By Clara and Hardy Steeholm. New York: The Viking Press. 277 *pp.* $3.75.

AS FDR SAID. By Frank Kingdon. New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce. 256 *pp.* $2.50.

THE WIT AND WISDOM OF FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT. Edited by Maxwell Meyersohn with the collaboration of Adele Archer. Boston: Beacon Press. 154 *pp.* $2.

By John T. Winterich

FDR WAS the most photographed man that ever lived. Since the stylus was invented well before the camera he may never gain the eminence of being the most written about, but he is already high on the roster; and the list lengthens apace, as witness these present exhibits.

"FDR: A Pictorial Biography" is precisely what it purports to be—a picture book with rather more text (and good text) than it appears to contain at first look-through. The photographs follow FDR from the age of eight months to within six weeks of his death. Many of them are new, but familiarity does not dull the edge of those that are not—many of them are already timeless. There are pictures that must have been widely used in their time which now take on an air of freshness and novelty: a view, for example, of Democrats listening to the 1928 election returns in New York's Seventy-first Regiment armory, with a very glum Al Smith seated behind an equally glum FDR; all of the hundred or so faces shown are eloquently funereal, and the thing might be a real funeral save for the fact that most of the mourners (including Smith and FDR) are smoking. Again, out of a 1940 election street crowd (FDR is riding through it in an open car) sticks a raised sign: "Better a 3rd Termer than a 3rd Rater!" The declassification was unjust to Wendell Willkie, but the argument was effective. This is an excellently selected, competently captioned pictorial anthology, and the text is a good refresher course in American and world history.

"The House at Hyde Park" has a picture section of its own which includes three photographs of FDR and nine of his mother, for this is mostly a book about Sarah Delano Roosevelt. Half of it in fact is given over to her "Household Book" begun in 1879 and continued beyond 1931, the last identifiable date. Here is the pattern of domestic economy under which FDR was reared. The eatables are rich in sweets (meringues, brandy peaches, pan dowdy, quince honey, candied

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orange peel), though such rough-and-tumble fare as pork and beans, fish balls, and barley broth are included. Gargles, mustard plasters, sprain lotions, croup treatments, and malaria cures are detailed, and a "remedy for seasickness" straight out of folklore: "½ a little flat bottle of liquid mercury—worn over the 'solar plexus.'" (Did the subsequent Assistant Secretary of the Navy go to sea thus fortified?)

The "Household Book" has a separate index, which gives it utilitarian as well as historical value. "The House at Hyde Park" is authentic as well as unusual Rooseveltana.

"As FDR Said," subtitled "a treasury of his speeches, conversations, and writings," is a brief categorization of the Roosevelt canon—an anthology of familiar and occasionally unfamiliar quotations. The headings include Wit and Humor, Political Philosophy, Reformer, Historian, Religion and Art, and half a dozen others, and there are running explanations and interpretations by Mr. Kingdon.

"The Wit and Wisdom of Franklin D. Roosevelt" is a sort of reduction of FDR's social and political philosophy to the status of aphorisms. Mr. Meyersohn also goes in for categories and comes up with twenty-two as against Mr. Kingdon's eleven. He presents a detailed list of sources, making his extracts easy to locate.

The original (1934) edition of Burton Stevenson's "Home Book of Quotations" contained four citations from FDR and thirty-seven from his cousin Theodore. In the current (1949) edition the respective figures are seven and thirty-eight. The outlook for FDR quotability is distinctly bullish.

A Man, Silos, and History

FDR: HIS PERSONAL LETTERS. Edited by Elliott Roosevelt. New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce. Vols. 3 and 4, 1928-45. 1600 pp. $10.

By Ernest K. Lindley

THESE last two volumes of Franklin D. Roosevelt's letters cover the sixteen years plus from his first election as Governor of New York until his death. They include much that is strictly personal: letters to "Mama," "Babs" (his wife), his children, and close friends; letters about his farm and hobbies; bantering notes to the members of his secretariat. They also include much that belongs under the heading of political management and much that is clearly public business.

The editor, the late President's son Elliott, presumably drew on this weightier material to give body to the volumes. An historian might wonder why he chose some items instead of others. And I suspect the general reader whose recollection has become a bit hazy will miss the significance of some of the papers—although the explanatory notes are on the whole fair.

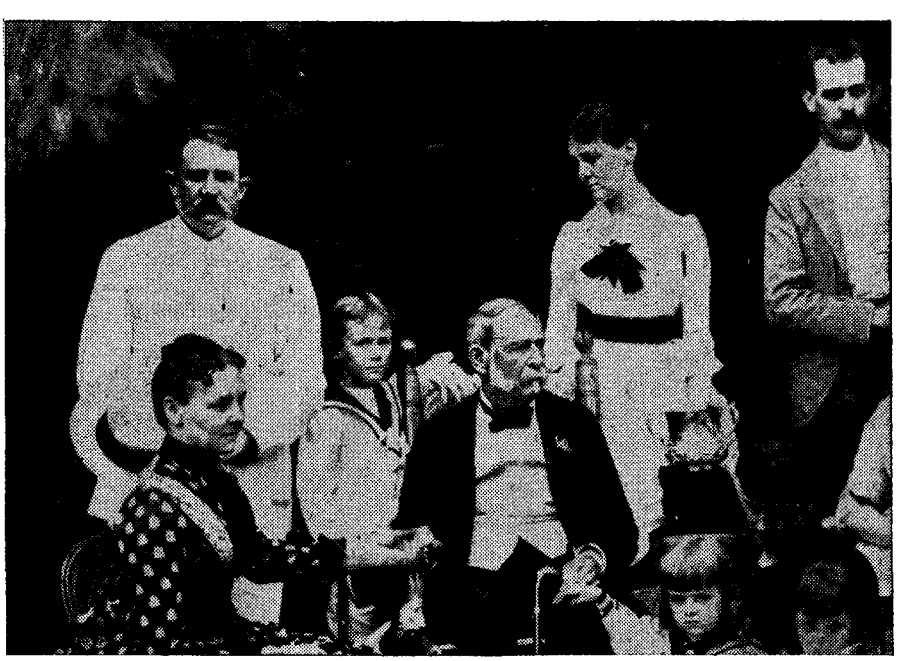
The choice of material and the chronological arrangement serve well however to bring out the many-sidedness of Roosevelt's activities, knowledge, and character. They reveal also how little he changed. He was the same man it seemed to me at both ends of both these volumes. This I think is chiefly because when he returned to public office at the age of forty-six he was not only mature but was a seasoned politician and had a well-developed political and social philosophy. On the morrow of his election to the governorship he is reaching out for the national leadership of his party. He is already clear in his own mind that it must be the more progressive—on occasion he used "radical"—of the two major parties. He is emphasizing social and economic issues in his own program and in his letters to Democrats in other states.

Also in 1929 he is already venting his irritation with the press. His own proposed text of a derisive statement is rigorously edited by someone, probably Louis Howe, before it is made public. Howe told me more than twenty years ago that one of Roosevelt's worst faults as a politician was his inclination to slap back at everyone who wrote something about him he didn't like. As most of the press was against him most of the time Roosevelt's hostility to it is understandable. But his ire often descended on individuals who were friendly to him. Howe and Steve Early toned down or pigeon-holed many of Roosevelt's criticisms of members of the press. (The collection includes a lengthy remonstrance which Roosevelt instructed Early to make to me. If Early ever delivered it, it was in such a gentle form that it left no memory.)

In so vast and varied a mine there are nuggets for prospectors of every taste. Critics of Roosevelt's financial policies will find irony in the fact that he was "horrified" to be informed that a new silo would cost more than $500. He suggested that his farmer, Moses Smith, look for a secondhand one for $200 to $300. His admirers will find added proof of his sure grasp of many great questions, especially in the realms of foreign policy and military defense. Both friends and critics will find amusement in his sedulous attention to the details of the visit of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth.

The Roosevelt-Willkie correspondence is also included, apparently in full. Scattered through the volumes are many new sidelights on history. (Two or three memoranda on controversial matters which Roosevelt dictated and filed away with a view to their publication in later years should be accepted with a degree of reserve.) But most of all one finds the man Roosevelt, usually buoyant, at home in public life—in fact delighting in it and in almost everything else that he found time to do, in the press of great affairs, from supervising his tree plantations to hunting for old maps of the Hudson River Valley.

Ernest K. Lindley is Washington editor of Newsweek.



—From "FDR: A Pictorial Biography."

The boy FDR and his mother flank Warren Delano II at a gathering of the clan.

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Music. *The indifferent linguist whose mother tongue is English has had to take great areas of musical commentary on faith. He may have read that the Viennese music critic Eduard Hanslick was a journalist of brilliant style whose writings revealed much of nineteenth-century esthetics; but the actual work of Hanslick, save for one early essay, remained for more than half a century immured in the mysteries of the German language. In like manner, the perceptions of such men as Rameau, Reichardt, and E. T. A. Hoffmann—to say nothing of Cleonides, Guido of Arezzo, and Artusi—were to be appreciated, in the English language, only at second hand. In two valuable collections reviewed this week, "Source Readings in Music History" and "Vienna's Golden Years of Music: 1850-1900," some of music's most influential, profound commentators speak for themselves.*

From Plato to Wagner

SOURCE READINGS IN MUSIC HISTORY. Compiled and Edited by Oliver Strunk. New York: W. W. Norton & Company. 919 *pp.* $8.50.

By C. G. Burke

DISCLAIMING intention to produce a musical Bartlett, Professor Strunk has assembled a large, informative, learned, and often amusing compendium which will be used certainly *as* a musical Bartlett. He did the work, and lazier men are going to quote from the result as if he had not. His book will enlarge the erudition of critics and teachers, many of whom will be grateful for the chance to cite Pietro Cerone as if they had heard of him before the publication of these source readings; and some may acknowledge their gratitude.

The book required nearly twenty-five centuries for the writing, since Plato started and Richard Wagner ended it, with seventy-nine others contributing between. The editor's considerable task was one of selection, frequent translation, correction, and annotation. He has presented musical history and evolution in the words of protagonists and spectators in critical periods. Since the originals are in seven languages mutable with the passage of the centuries, and the technical language of music is not yet anywhere permanently fixed, the mere comprehension of texts before the editor dared assay their values must have been severely onerous; and the completeness of the annotations (on their smaller scale, within their restricted frame) bespeaks a dogged diligence not unworthy of comparison with the more heroic investigations of Gibbon. Professor Strunk traces every casual name, explains every offhand reference to work and deed, in the eighty-seven documents he has chosen as *porte-paroles* for the case of music. No doubt this very completeness will be found trivial and ostentatious, precious even, by some readers; but this is like complaining of an excess of light which dazzles but can be avoided.

A work of selection in finite (albeit large) dimensions implies infinite exclusion. This is not an encyclopedia but an epitome. Spanish and Russian music as such are not represented here. It is probable that contemporaneous accounts of the rub of music on society, told by non-musicians of different epochs, could have been multiplied with advantage to the book. The way is pointed by the inclusion of some easy comments on opera by the scented Philistine, Joseph Addison; but it would have been useful to find these counterbalanced by the less superficial opinions of Congreve or Dryden. Gabriel has as much right to speak as Lucifer; both have significance and both have followers. In general Professor Strunk has recognized this and included among his great men some small ones of great pomposity, particularly some musical commentators who stuffed their comments with doubtful allusions to classical antiquity, much as a Representative in Congress prefaces his dedication of an athletic field and cocktail lounge with telling references to the Founding Fathers and the brothers James.

"Source Readings in Music History" (title less brilliant than the book is valuable) starts with the mind in the curious age when it dared to speculate without measuring reprisals: Plato discusses good and bad (ethically) rhythms; and he maintains what has been repeated by every musical revolutionary since as if it were a new discovery—that music ought to support the vocal text. Plato, today a snob by current Soviet decision, expresses a fear that intense indulgence in a bath of music may weaken man, this fear echoed later by a man of state, Lenin. Athenaeus cites Theophrastus, teaching that persons subject to sciatica would become immune "if one played the aulos in the Phrygian harmony over the part affected," a big medicine corroborated by Boetius, who reveals the unusual powers of spondaic melody, capable of reducing the murderous, amorous, and incendiary fury of a youth "to a state of perfect calm."

The early Christian theologians urged the power of music to move men to good works, while others suggested its affinity to evil; and a dozen centuries later Luther and Calvin expressed both notions in their forceful terminology. In the fourteenth century Jacob of Liège deplored modernism, a lament not unknown to us. The nomenclature of the scale of Guido of Arezzo is nowadays most frequently found as one of the cowardly subterfuges of crossword puzzles, but in "Source Readings" G of A himself explains its origin. Bartholomew Ramos describes his improvement of the monochord of Pythagoras. Vincenzo Galilei denounces some literal methods of fitting music to text which have persisted ever since. Raguenet and Verneuse dispute the merits of Lully with an elegance befitting their century. The fantastic E. T. A. Hoffmann, fantastically suspended in semi-immortality by Offenbach, discusses a better than Offenbach. And so on.

There it is, incomplete naturally. Music explained by all its diaries would require a hundred thousand volumes. The learned book is standard now, and invaluable to those who would be learned on the recondite history of the art which sounds forever open. It should be noted that the volume is handsome, substantial and provided with an extremely legible typography and very clean musical notations from the hand of Gordon Mapes.

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Maybe He Was Right

VIENNA'S GOLDEN YEARS OF MUSIC: 1850-1900. By Eduard Hanslick. Translated and edited by Henry Pleasants III. New York: Simon & Schuster. 341 *pp.* $3.75.

By Rudolph Reti

THIS book touches upon a fascinating problem. The problem is not solved here nor even discussed. Yet it flickers as a constant stimulus through the pages, rings as an underlying theme from the sometimes contradictory but always interesting asseverations and even from the well-chosen pictures and caricatures. The problem arises from the question whether there is in art, and particularly in music, any final evaluation; and also whether history may rectify erroneous judgments.

Here are some forty collected reviews by Eduard Hanslick, the all-powerful critic of nineteenth-century Vienna, then the hub of the musical world. All his writings were one great battle for certain principles of "absolute music" that he believed must be followed to make music a truly creative art. Accordingly, he developed an almost grotesque antagonism of values. He painted all black those great composers of his time of whom (Wagner, Bruckner, Wolf) he disapproved and all white those of whom (Brahms, Schumann, Dvorak) he approved, with perhaps only Tchaikovsky and Verdi in between. And strangely enough almost the whole musical world followed a like arbitrary division, whether they believed that fifty years hence Wagner and his disciples would tower luminously over the musical scene, with Brahms relegated to an academic imitator of the classics or, vice versa, that Wagner would be considered a somewhat amateurish "sensationalist," with Brahms elevated to the position of Beethoven's true successor.

—*Vienna National Library.*

Wagner and the critics.

Hanslick doffing his hat to Bruckner.

At the turn of the century the first of these two extremes seemed almost to have come true; Hanslick lived to see the beginning of this development. Wagner's fame grew like one of the astronomical novas to unbelievable dimensions. The verdict of the future seemed to have been announced.

History, however, is not so simple. Today, half a century later, Brahms stands more firmly than ever. Of course Wagner and to a lesser degree Bruckner continue to be considered as milestones. Yet historical and esthetic criticism imposes more and more restrictions on their importance—significantly, imposes them *from the same point of view and with almost the same arguments* as did Hanslick.

Therefore these collected reviews form most interesting and timely reading. Hanslick's portrayals of famous performers of his time such as Patti, Lilli Lehmann, Clara Schumann, Anton Rubinstein, Bülow, and others still emanate charm and excitement, notwithstanding the somewhat outmoded style and some perhaps slightly ridiculous details. In the essentials Hanslick always knew what he was talking about. In his autobiography he wrote the following lines, with which the understanding editor concludes this persuasive anthology:

> I know that I represent a small minority, and I know that I shall not live to see a reversal of taste in this regard. Younger critics may. I shall not dare prophesy how long Wagner's music will command public enthusiasm, but I do not doubt that in fifty years the writings of the Wagnerites will be looked upon in amazement as the relics of an intellectual plague.

Rudolph Reti, composer and former Viennese music critic, is the author of the forthcoming book, "The Thematic Process in Music."

Something to Hum

MUSICAL COMEDY IN AMERICA. By Cecil Smith. New York: Theatre Arts Books. 374 *pp.* $5.

By Irving Kolodin

ANY QUALIFIED author undertaking the study of a subject in which he is interested is privileged to approach it from an aspect that appeals to him, that has logic and makes sense. Therefore I honor the viewpoint of "idea" which animates Cecil Smith's path-breaking survey of American entertainments. Perhaps such chapter headings as The Turn of the Century, Before and During the First World War, The Post War Revue, The Revue Becomes Civilized are valid expressions of a point of view. I do not regard them so or accept them as anything more than catch-alls into which much unordered information is deposited.

If there is sense or logic discernible in the progression of light music which has produced any number of delectable if incomplete creations for Broadway, from De Koven's "Robin Hood" to the Rodgers-Hammerstein "South Pacific," it must be surely in terms of personalities—the creators themselves who have set a fashion or failed it, the producers who have postulated a standard or none at all, the performers who have evoked a mood or defeated it. In other words I find Smith's schematization too concerned with temporal elements, too little concerned with perpetual ones, even within the brief span of time Broadway recognizes as "perpetual."

How can one avoid in a full-dress treatment of musical comedy in America a consecutive appraisal of Irving Berlin from the "Music Box Revues" through "As Thousands Cheer" and "Face the Music" to "This is the Army," "Annie Get Your Gun," and "Miss Liberty"? Here is a pattern, consecutive or not, which greatly influenced everything tangential to it. Similarly, the Kern pattern, the Gershwin, the Rodgers, the Porter—not to mention the Duke, the Arlen, the Weill, the Loesser, etc. Musical comedy after all lives on music—nobody ever loved a show for its gags and "ideas" if there was nothing to hum on the way home. (I regret, too, not finding in proper place and with accurate attribution the definition of a Romberg show as one in which you hum the tunes on the way in.)

"Musical Comedy in America" contains a vast amount of material never previously brought within covers; it dates many obscure happenings, isolates beginnings, points up climaxes;

(*Continued on page* 50)

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The Crisis of the Colleges

AS THE defense program of the nation swings into operation and American youth increasingly faces the prospect of being drafted from the normal pursuits of peace into the service of arms the problem of the colleges which are to be denuded of their customary enrolments takes on ever more menacing proportions. To many of the smaller of these institutions the falling off in the student body may well spell disaster, while to the larger and wealthier the curtailment of numbers though less catastrophic must yet force stringent economies and reduction of the teaching body. The situation, if inevitable and unavoidable, is tragic, not merely because of the hardship it must work on the colleges themselves but as well because at a time when the inculcation of knowledge and clear thinking is essential one of the most potent agencies for their dissemination is stripped of its fullest powers.

The university, the library, the newspaper, the radio, and to lesser degree the motion picture—these are the forces that in the terrible years of the recent past have been shaping public opinion. No one of them can be weakened without by so much casting a greater burden on the others. So now if the influence of the colleges is for the time being to be straitened it is incumbent upon the other agencies of information to take up the slack. There are trained men in the colleges who will be out of jobs—their special knowledge should be able vastly to serve what must be, as the efforts of the nation are turned toward preparedness and concern with foreign affairs, a desire for enlightenment on public matters. Circumstance has forced the American to become international-minded, but the pace of events which have so conditioned him has outstripped the knowledge upon which their proper understanding must rest.

It has long been a commonplace that Americans are curious, eager to "know," quick to apprehend. Give them facts and they will gobble them up as chickens corn. That too often these facts become an end in themselves and information an anodyne instead of a stimulant may undoubtedly be alleged with a measure of truth. But the fact remains that the American has a pliant and receptive mind, hospitable to the new, a mind restless and inquiring. For some thirty-five years now the American people have marched steadily on from concern with national affairs to a profound, if sometimes unwilling, preoccupation with foreign events. They have traveled a long road from those days little more than a half-century ago when hardly a paper in any smaller town of the United States gave more than cursory mention to general happenings abroad and when only a few of even the largest metropolitan dailies gave regular coverage to other than sensational news. Today we suffer from a plethora of reporting and are sick with a surfeit of too much.

What all serious people long for—and the times have made most men serious—is some touchstone to judgment, some reliable method by which to decide whether conclusions are in tune with facts. It is the experts who better than anyone else can speak with authority about the background of events; it is they who can look forward with more likelihood of correctness than those who, less knowledgable than themselves, have not their familiarity with the past to shed light on the present. And so we are back again at the college staffs and the men who may perforce be released from the classrooms to, we hope, wider fields for the dissemination of their knowledge.

War and the attempt to prevent war must for the time being, alas, take the first place in the national consciousness. But because they must —and because they must engross so many—it behooves all those who are not directly involved in their mechanism, to keep alive those values the perpetuation of which alone makes preparedness the supreme necessity. If the colleges are shorn of their full potentiality the schools have a new responsibility; it is theirs to instil something of what in more fortunate times could await maturer students. If the colleges must let some of their instructors go it is the newspapers and radio which must supply more of the facts of the classrooms. If the colleges are to come out of their ordeal unscathed in the long run it will be because the values for which they stand will have suffered no diminishment even when their own capacities have temporarily been forced to retrenchment.

—A. L.

Work in Progress

READERS who want to help a manuscript on its way may be able to assist the following, who are looking for books, letters, and other relevant information pertaining to their areas of investigation:

Curtis C. Davis, Homewood Apts., Charles at 31st St., Baltimore, Md., needs material on General Lewis Littlepage (1762-1802) from collateral descendants and others. Grace S. Yaukey, 4400 Maple Ave., Bethesda, Md., wants material on Carlos P. Romulo during the time he was studying at Columbia University. Herman Levart, 312 W. 78 St., New York City, wishes data on Nathanel West. Helene Geauque, Sanbornville, N. H., wishes information about Joanna Oram, born in Kittery, Maine, in 1748, for her historical novel about Free Will Baptists. Maxine T. Boatner, 139 N. Main St., West Hartford, Conn. at work on a biography of Edward Miner Gallaudet, founder of the college for the deaf in Washington, D. C., wishes data, letters, or diaries on the period of deaf education from 1817 to 1917. Franklin J. Meine, 153 No. Michigan Ave., Chicago 1, Ill., is working on a volume about the "Davy Crockett Almanacs" printed in Nashville, Tenn., 1835-1841, and wants to hear from anyone who has information about their authors or publishers. Mrs. Fannie W. Foxworth, Georgetown City Schools, Georgetown, S. C., wants information on the Winyah Indigo Society and its school established in Georgetown about 1757.

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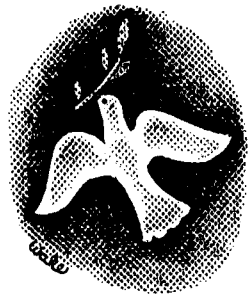
Aubade



Mohandas K. Gandhi • January 30, 1948

By Melanie Byron Gordon

I

WE DRINK from the River of your life
Flowing through many lands,
With rich loam inbeing,
Informing, becoming,
The Wine of Truth
Remembering . . .

II

Through cumulous horizons
Triumphal constellations rode
With unmatched horsepower
Down wide avenues of delay,
Where there reared, at the sound of trumpeting,
A hydra-headed beast of despair,
Whose tail drew a third of the stars,
And the ram and the he-goat locked horns
In the fearful eyes of the drivers,
While the three states of being hung
On the crucified air
Waiting . . .

III

The music of evening permeated the garden,
Odor of sandalwood sang, petunias chimed,
In the enclosure red the rose . . .

The afternoon was theirs
The Fast being broken
They were preparing to give thanks
To pray for the Apparition of Peace,—
The temple would never hold the prayers . . .

Quietly
Sainthood hovering above his head
Across the grass moved
A small frail man
At the irrevocable timeless moment
In the Garden of New Gethsemane
Coming to meet the betrayal fire
From whose smoke would rise
His Phoenix Word

The translucent vessel overflown,
See how his blood streams in the firmament
Confounding Babel!

IV

Ah, Mahatma, you the symbol, unassuming;
Giving graven in the mind;
The open palm for syllables of fire,
Dissolving fingers
Writing indelibly upon the Indian afternoon
Your winged word, "Ahinsa";
Heroically it lingers
Riding upon the back of the sky!

V

Which was the instrument and whose the choice?
Can we speak thus of one
Whose every act was choice,
Led to this hour?
Shall we choose wisely then, now and here?
Everywhere that children scatter
The petals of their innocence?
For these teachings are
As non-sectarian as hunger.
The scattered leaves of all the universe
Float through the mind unbound.

VI

From the quick thirty-eight,
Accumulated hatred and misunderstanding,
Hard packed in the small lead of dissent,
Made its rat tat tat;

Three drops of awful Truth stained the green grass
Beside a crumpled rose,
A little worm of smoke hung on the air
And was gone.

Burst into the golden butterfly of love;
And the frail hand that fluttered to forehead
Touched to flower that afternoon
The Springtime of a new age.

VII

Peace, Immortal, Being,
In Union conceived . . .
It was a good Friday that it happened,
This parting, this dawn,
This flame that rose.
The heavens opened, even as Stephen said,
Will and Deed, One.
The Morning Star was here.

Sacred River blazed to Sea of Glass . . .
Stood the Guru,
Vertical as a tree,
Shedding flame leaves at Harvest.

VIII

The ashes stir . . .
Now a gray rustling of wings
For the foreheads of men;
And the war of ideas to be won
Only by the lifted arm of your farewell—
Non-violent, angelic, evangelical,—
Bapu-Ji, you are claimed by the ages now,
You whose word could federate the world,
Whose way could morally re-arm mankind.

Sweet and bitter is the Open Book,
Whose leaves are for the healing of Nations . . .
Hearing the Trumpet, will the people come?

I lift a white carnation
From the feet of your bronze benevolence
And weep.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Mr. Canwell, Not Dr. Allen

SIR: In his review of "Witch Hunt" [*SRL* Dec. 30] Merle Miller attributes to Dr. Raymond B. Allen, president of the University of Washington, the statement:

> If someone insists there is discrimination against Negroes in this country or that there is inequality of wealth, there is every reason to believe that person is a Communist.

Reference to "Witch Hunt," page 141, shows that Albert F. Canwell said this and not Dr. Allen.

FRANCIS BIDDLE.

Washington, D. C.

SIR: The Honorable Mr. Biddle is perfectly correct. Attributing such a statement to Dr. Allen is entirely my fault. The paragraph referred to on page 141 reads as follows:

> The 1946 election was marked in Washington, as elsewhere, by a swing to the right and the new Legislature promptly authorized, among its first acts, the creation of a committee on un-American activities under the chairmanship of Albert F. Canwell. The committee was closely patterned after the Tenney Committee of California. At the same session some $25,000,000 was appropriated for a sorely needed medical school at the University of Washington. Perhaps because of this the Regents selected a new president in 1946—Dr. Raymond B. Allen. Dr. Allen had previously served as dean and president of several medical schools but lacked general administrative experience and, as events were to prove, was a novice in the type of politics practised in Washington. Canwell was formerly a deputy sheriff in conservative Spokane, where he had served as chief of the "identification bureau," and his election to the Legislature in 1946 represented his first major venture in politics. The degree of his political sophistication may be measured by the following excerpts from a campaign speech: "If someone insists there is discrimination against Negroes in this country, or that there is inequality of wealth, there is every reason to believe that person is a Communist."

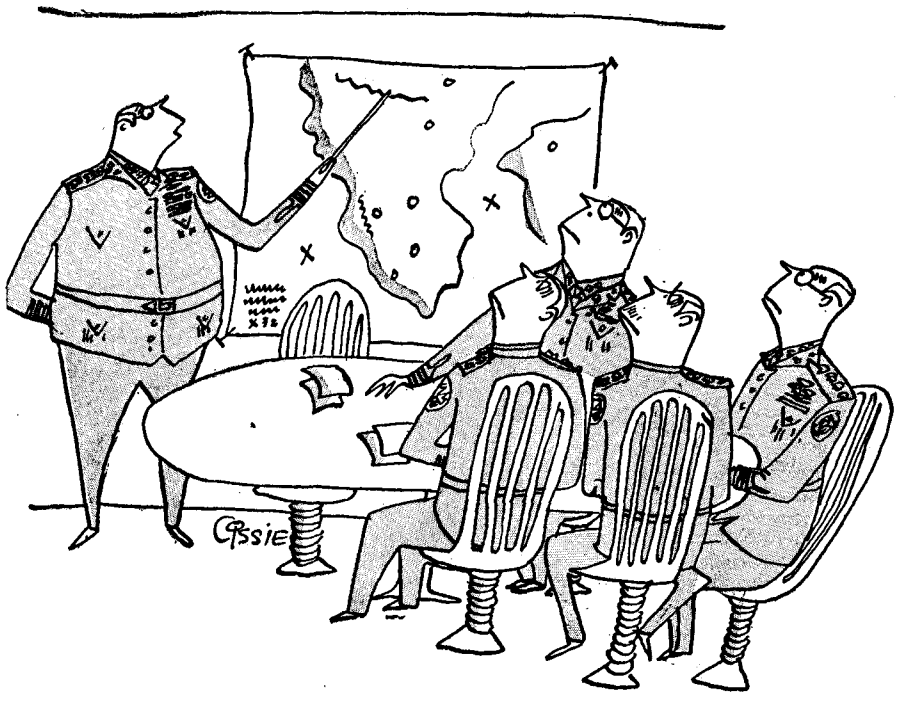
Some place in the middle there I simply missed the reference to Mr. Canwell. I apologize for attributing the statement to Dr. Allen.

MERLE MILLER.

New York, N. Y.

For a War on War

SIR: A rose is a rose is a rose is a rose? Then, as surely as night follows day, a bomb is a bomb is a bomb is a bomb! What in the name of common sense does it matter whether the death- and destruction-bearing missile is an atomic bomb or a flame-bearing incendiary bomb . . . a big bomb or a little bomb . . . a block-buster or a buzz bomb? Death is just as final whichever way it comes.



"In connection with this military maneuver I refer you to chapter four of my book published last spring by the Authentic Publishing Company, available as you know at all leading bookstores . . ."

Why not get down to the core of the matter? Why not direct our attacks against the causes of war and against war itself, instead of against one means of waging war? When we face our enemy moral values go up in smoke if the enemy has none. Either we match or surpass the firepower of our enemy (and this goes for psychological firepower, too) or we perish. Either we make use of every death- and destruction - dealing device dreamed up by man, or we are exterminated. Either we try every psychological means of changing the thinking processes of the peoples of our enemy, or we are lost.

We do not, for example, cry to the housetops, "Stop the use of fire! Fire kills. Fire tortures. Fire deforms. Fire lays waste the land and scorches it. Stop the use of fire!" How unutterably stupid! We control fire. We harness it. We bend it to our needs. We teach our children not to play with it.

Let's keep on developing uses for atomic energy without witch hunts. Let's keep on making atomic bombs which, when not put to use, will be stock-piled into the building up of a whale of a world police force, one of overwhelming striking power, benevolent, but of lightning speed, should some misguided nation overstep.

The larger the world community becomes, the greater the necessity of a larger police force; just as the larger a city grows, the greater the need for an expanding police force to keep order within the city. There probably always will be people who need policing. And there probably always will be such nations.

So let's stop wasting time in specious arguments as whether or not to use the atomic bomb again. Let's really begin to work and fight to prevent everlasting bloodshed.

HAZEL FELMAN BUCHBINDER.

New York, N. Y.

SIR: "Getting Off the Pyramid," by Oscar Hammerstein [*SRL* Dec. 23], is sane and sound. . . . Mr. Hammerstein says in part: "I am convinced that if this world is to be saved from the destruction that modern warfare promises, it will be saved by those whom hard-headed men call dreamers." I know of no one more capable of heading a movement of laymen who also happen to be "dreamers" than Mr. Hammerstein himself.

GENE BOARDMAN HOOVER.

Kansas City, Mo.

Publicity by the Military

SIR: Your reader John Pauker recently took exception to a statement by me in "Why Advertise God's Country?" [*SRL* Oct. 21] to the effect that "until 1949 publicity in the vital areas occupied by American armed forces actually was left to [the American armed] forces!" Mr. Pauker stated that the armed forces had "used civilians." So what? What matters is who gives the orders. In answer to my inquiry I have just received from Edward W. Barrett, Assistant Secretary of State, a letter that says in part: "Until September 1949 American publicity in Germany was conducted by the Office of Military Government of the United States, which had a large number of civilian employees"—which is what I said in the first place.

EDGAR ANSEL MOWRER.

Washington, D. C.

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Seeing Things

SUCCESS STORY

ROBERT E. SHERWOOD was talking to Elliot Norton, the uncommonly able critic of the *Boston Post*. He was explaining, in an interview published in *The New York Times* on the Sunday before "Second Threshold"* opened on Broadway, the background of this last of Philip Barry's plays which he had been called in to revise after Mr. Barry's death.

In March 1949 the two dramatists, who had been friends for thirty years, chanced to be vacationing at Hobe Sound at the same time. On the day that Mr. Barry first talked to Mr. Sherwood about "Second Threshold" a coincidence occurred which was strange indeed considering the play's theme. James V. Forrestal, the former Secretary of Defense, who was also at Hobe Sound, was stricken with "operational fatigue" and rushed by plane to the Naval Hospital at Bethesda, Maryland, where on May 22 he committed suicide. Inasmuch as "Second Threshold" is concerned with the bitter disillusionment of a man who no longer wishes to live after having achieved high office and come to know the emptiness of power, Mr. Barry naturally began to fear when he learned how Forrestal had died that people would think his new play was about Forrestal. He mentioned this worry to Mr. Sherwood just two weeks before his own sudden death on December 3 that year.

However natural Mr. Barry's worry may have been, "Second Threshold" makes it clear that it was needless. Its central character, Josiah Bolton, is plainly not derived from any single public servant. He is very much an individual in his own right and an individual of Mr. Barry's creation. He is a person of force and intelligence whose perceptions are subtle, whose taste is informed, and who manages to be charming even in his disenchantment. If we are never told precisely what his post was, if we realize only that he had been of Cabinet rank, and are kept somewhat tantalizingly in the dark as to why the sweets of power had become acid to his tongue, no doubt Mr. Barry had his reasons.

He was not thinking merely in terms of Washington. His was a wider interest. He was considering the emptiness which with the calendar's advances can overtake the most fulfilled lives. He had success no less than power in mind and the artist as much as the government official. He was contemplating the moment many older people face before the needed second wind has been gained, when the goal won may seem unworthy of the winning, when the problem of living shifts from attack to defense, when the novelty has gone, and even stout hearts and minds can surrender during interludes of fatigue to the death wish.

Mr. Barry's Josiah Bolton does not commit suicide. He is saved by the love and understanding of his daughter. Before he regains his regard for life, however, we are granted some insight into what has caused him to misplace his will to live. He is a man who has come to see both himself and his career plain. He recognizes that in the very process of succeeding he has been the victim of his own success. He is conscious of the loneliness into which his ambition has led him, the fear of human relationships it has created in him, and the distrust it has made him feel for all emotions, including his own. When he quotes, "Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men," he is speaking from his own sorrow about his own condition.

Serious as is the basic theme of "Second Threshold" Mr. Barry's approach to it is not solemn. In a manner and with a charm and lightness very much his own he has written a comedy rather than a tragedy about the anguish of disillusionment. The expected felicities of his phrasing, the polish and wit of his dialogue, the sensitivity of his responses, the true and shining sophistication of his mind —all these delightful qualities, which have characterized Mr. Barry's better comedies, are to be found in "Second Threshold."

BUT THIS time a difference is discernible. The bantering Mr. Barry of his drawing-room successes and the Mr. Barry who in his more ambitious scripts reached for larger themes have worked together as one. At the play's core, however, and underlying its gaiety is a new tension. The most smiling lines have about them a sense of urgency. They speak for a mature Mr. Barry, troubled in his own mind, who

—*Talbot.*

Clive Brook, Margaret Phillips, Hugh Reilly—"a mature Mr. Barry, troubled in his mind."

* *SECOND THRESHOLD, by Philip Barry, with revisions by Robert E. Sherwood. Staged by Alfred de Liagre, Jr. Scenery by Donald Oenslager. Production Associate, Philip Barry, Jr. Presented by Mr. de Liagre. With Clive Brook, Margaret Phillips, Hugh Reilly, Betsy von Furstenberg, Frederick Bradlee, and Gordon Richards. At the Morosco Theatre, New York City. Opened January 2, 1951.*

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had tackled a fascinating problem.

That there are faults in "Second Threshold" I do not mean to deny. There are scenes, for example, which seem unresolved and moments when both the public position and the personal dilemma of Josiah Bolton are stated in terms unduly vague. I for one wish, for the sake of the larger theme now too often pushed to the outskirts of the script, that so much of Josiah Bolton's distress and the final solution of his problem were not centered on his relations with his daughter. I also think the play would have gained in strength had time been found to include among the reasons for Bolton's disillusionment the cruel, unrelenting, and often scurrilous persecution by press, radio, and gossip to which he must have been exposed in the company of all our Government officials in Washington.

If these are among the weaknesses of "Second Threshold," to my way of thinking they are unimportant compared to the play's virtues. No new American drama this season has been more adult in its subject or written with greater delicacy and compassion than Mr. Barry's. None has been more engrossing in its gradual revelations of the past and in touching upon the confusions of tangled lives. Although here and there the comedy may have a fragmentary quality, what matters is that it has quality. Nothing is rarer than that, or more welcome.

MR. SHERWOOD'S share in whipping into final form a script Mr. Barry was himself constantly revising cannot have been easy. When in the interview with Elliot Norton already referred to he said, "it is a difficult and delicate job to work on a play by a close friend," he was indulging in an understatement. His aim was to make it "the play Phil would have ended up with if he had lived and been able to revise it himself." He told Mr. Norton he left most of the first act intact, that the principal changes are in the second act and the early part of the third, that he eliminated four characters and found it necessary to make some drastic cuts. But with such skill and sympathy has Mr. Sherwood performed his task that it is impossible to tell his work from Mr. Barry's. There is no break in style or change in mood. The collaboration is complete.

The taste which distinguishes Mr. Barry's and Mr. Sherwood's writing characterizes the production "Second Threshold" has been given. It is as manifest in the handsome library Donald Oenslager has designed as it is in the direction of Alfred de Liagre, Jr., and the acting in general. Mr. de Liagre is a producer who is at once

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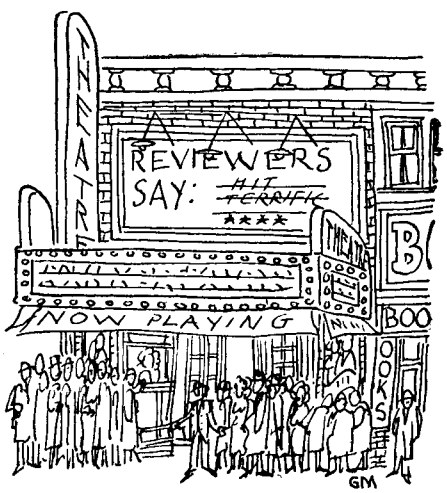
fastidious and courageous. He has the happy faculty of communicating to his staging of a play the affection he feels for the script. His touch is sensitive and urbane. He is alert to the surface nuances and the niceties no less than to the profundities which may lurk beneath them. He knows precisely what values he is after and can polish a scene even as Mr. Barry could polish a line. Furthermore, he has a shrewd eye for casting.

CERTAINLY he could not have found anyone more ideally suited to play Josiah Bolton than Clive Brook. The number of actors is small indeed who, without shouting and frowning or hiding behind historical make-ups, can persuade audiences that public affairs would be safe in their hands. Yet one believes instantly and continuously in Mr. Brook as an individual who has held high office. Without effort he suggests the illusion not only of having achieved power but of having power within himself. He is fine looking, as much every inch a gentleman as ever Lear was every inch a king. His strength is matched only by his charm. His acting is unobtrusive and unfailingly persuasive. Mr. Brook is the only person I can think of who could deliver without creating acute embarrassment the occasional speeches addressed to Death, who is supposedly lurking outside the window. The simple truth is that not in years do I remember seeing a performance geared to the scale of a drawing room which equaled his in suavity, authority, and skill.

As Bolton's daughter, Margaret Phillips makes a further advance in a career already notable. No one who has watched her development from "The Late George Apley," "Another Part of the Forest," and "Summer and Smoke" can question the gifts at her command. Hers is no easy assignment in "Second Threshold." She must first appear as a seemingly cold worldling, engaged to a man in England who is older than her father. After this, however, she must make it clear that she is not frozen herself but has been chilled by her father's preoccupation with his own work. Miss Phillips meets the challenge of these changes admirably, with a fine awareness of the shadings and variety of the character she is playing.



Betsy von Furstenberg, as her young friend who is sailing for Europe, proves a delectable discovery. She is easy on the eyes and has a captivating personality. Frederick Bradlee is agreeable in the shadowy and brief part of Bolton's son. In fact, the only performance about which I have any reservations or misgivings is Hugh Reilly's young doctor who ultimately becomes engaged to Bolton's daughter. There is something wrong about him in such a setting. Although the lack of worldliness is one thing, more important still is the lack of decisiveness.

For the evening as a whole, however, I have genuine gratitude and respect. It is literate and civilized and makes us realize once again how much the theatre has lost by losing Philip Barry.

—JOHN MASON BROWN.

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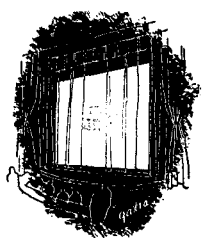
SRL Goes to the Movies

LOVE, FAGIN, AND THE CENSORS

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Two controversial motion pictures from abroad, Robert Rossellini's "The Miracle" and an English version of Charles Dickens's "Oliver Twist," are reviewed this week, both of which have suffered from censorship that we believe prejudiced and unfair to the artistic merit and intent of both films.*

There is a simple but fundamental principle involved in these controversies; a principle that probably is more important in our idea-sensitive age and contracting world than ever before. It is the right of people to read, see, and hear any work of art or idea or viewpoint without censorship, suppression, or pressure from any group, public official, faction, or government agency. The Saturday Review *believes this principle must be defended at all times against any infringement from any quarter, and now even more than ever.*



ONCE again an omnibus film has come our way from Europe, one that forms a virtual showcase for the particular talents of three of the Continent's most eminent directors. "Ways of Love,"* though, is quite different from a delightful entertainment package like "Trio" in that each of its forty-five-minute items was conceived and made independently, without thought of inclusion in a compilation. This compilation is the result of the insight of Joseph Burstyn, the man who imported "The Bicycle Thief," "Paisan," and "Open City." Mr. Burstyn saw a faint but apparent thematic thread running through Jean Renoir's "A Day in the Country," Marcel Pagnol's "Jofroi," and Roberto Rossellini's "The Miracle." Each dealt in some way with the force of love opposed to the forces of man and nature.

The three films are neat illustrations of the independence that the film industries of France and Italy allow their more creative film personalities, most of whom seem to take for themselves the title of "director." It is a title that implies somewhat broader functions than it does in Hollywood, for the director, when he reaches some stature, is the truly responsible man. It is no accident that the final result often has a quality of high artistry that Hollywood, with its system of hierarchies and split functions, almost never achieves. Thus Pagnol, Renoir, Rossellini are primarily film artists; they express themselves, for better or worse, through the medium of film.

One of the three has been involved in controversy and censorship problems since shortly after its premiere performance. First it was New York's commissioner of licenses who decided, entirely upon his own, that Rossellini's "The Miracle" was blasphemous. He stopped the picture (that portion of it) from being shown—but not for long. A court ruling decided that he was acting beyond the powers of his office, since the responsible state board had already reviewed and passed the film. It is being shown again, but Catholic organizations are picketing the theatre, and important Catholic leaders have denounced the picture and are continuing their efforts to have it banned. Catholics in America have been forbidden to see it, although it is interesting to note that when this picture appeared in Italy, a Catholic nation, there was no question of censorship nor outcry of any kind.

Another aspect of the controversy however concerns the actual merits of "The Miracle"; and reactions to it from critics and public alike have differed radically. Is it a masterpiece or is it "bad art"? For this reviewer it is not quite either. There is no doubt that pictorially the picture is a gem, with its sensitive evocation of a small Italian town and the surrounding countryside near Salerno in Italy. And certainly Anna Magnani again demonstrates her magnificent qualities of acting. The role was difficult: a simple-minded goat-tender who believes her pregnancy immaculate and divine.

But my quarrel would be with Mr. Rossellini, whose method of improvization from scene to scene, with only the barest of story structures, often results in the kind of motion-picture experience that planned production could never give but can also result in extraneous detail that adds little, or even harms, the over-all effect. In this case he is often gratuitously unpleasant. The scene in which the simple girl is taken advantage of—to put it euphemistically—is carried on to unnecessary length. This, I ought to make clear, is unpleasant because it is a lapse of artistic taste. But my credulity disappeared entirely when some fairly mature students turned suddenly upon the forlorn creature and sent her climbing up a mountain-side—from where, followed by a billy-goat, she steals into a monastery to bear her child unaided. Somewhere along the line Mr. Rossellini lost a bit of human understanding and feeling and decided to go in for something close to sadism instead.

Utterly different in mood and handling is "A Day in the Country." Here is wistfulness and gentle irony. The daughter and wife of a Paris milkman —who has taken them for a Sunday's outing in the country—are seduced by two rather bored and idle young men from the upper classes. The time of the Maupassant short story is late nineteenth century, and Jean Renoir has worked lovingly to capture the essential details of period and place, and to preserve the story's typically Gallic quality. For one of the young men, Anatole, it is only an afternoon's gamy episode with a milkman's bored wife. For the more sensitive Henry it will be the haunting lost opportunity for a fulfilled love; for the innocent girl it will be her only experience of passion—for she must go on to marry the lumpish Rudolph.

Renoir in this is by and large the craftsman who whatever his material understands it thoroughly. It is a Sunday afternoon in the country that he wishes to describe; and it is a day that has, sadly, some consequences. But he does not mean for you to shed more than a small tear.

For "Jofroi" Marcel Pagnol is again in Provence, in the country of "The Baker's Wife" and "The Well-Digger's Daughter." Very real as his story is, it is more than realism that he achieves. In this picture, as in just about everything that he has done, he reveals and illuminates the lives of simple people. He makes you comprehend the quality of their attachment to nature and to their environment, and this comprehension is humorous and poignant by turns. "Jofroi" is taken from the Jean Giono novel. It is the story of an old man's attachment to the barren peach

**WAYS OF LOVE, made up of three films: A DAY IN THE COUNTRY. Screen play by Jean Renoir based on the story "Une Partie de Campagne" by Guy de Maupassant. Directed by Jean Renoir. Presented by Joseph Burstyn. With Sylvia Bataille, Gabriello, Jeanne Marken, Georges St. Saens, Bordan, Jacques Borel, Gabrielle Fontane, Jean Renoir, and Marguerite Renoir.*
JOFROI. Screen play by Marcel Pagnol based on the story "Jofroi de la Maussan" by Jean Giono. Directed by Mr. Pagnol. Presented by Joseph Burstyn. With Vincent Scotto, Annie Toinon, Tyrand, Henri Poupon, A. Robert, Charles Blavette, and Odette Roger.
THE MIRACLE. Screen play by Roberto Rossellini and Tullio Pinelli based on an original story by Federico Fellini. Directed by Mr. Rossellini. Presented by Joseph Burstyn. With Anna Magnani, Mr. Fellini, and others.

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trees that he planted and nurtured long years back. He has sold the orchard to his neighbor, who wishes to plant good Provençal wheat on the piece of land. The contract is signed, the money exchanged, and the villagers wonder about Jofroi's sanity when he first threatens to kill his neighbor and then himself if the trees are uprooted. But for Jofroi the imposition of a contract is the mad thing when it concerns a matter of the human heart. M. Pagnol has wrung out all the wry humor and the rich humanness inherent in his situation; yet he has told his story with a maximum of pointedness, a minimum of embellishment. Thus in "Jofroi" the work of the craftsman and the genius coalesce, and, of the three pictures, I will remember it longest. —HOLLIS ALPERT.

* * *

"OLIVER TWIST"* is a superb movie. It was produced by Ronald Neame and directed by David Lean, the team responsible for "Great Expectations," and all through it I had the feeling that Mr. Dickens himself must have been sitting behind the cameras making a few helpful suggestions.

Surely each member of the cast is precisely what Dickens had in mind when he wrote the novel—excepting only Fagin, whom he might criticize as too gentle. There are such veterans as Robert Newton, who snarls ominously and often as Bill Sikes; Francis L. Sullivan as a properly beefy Mr. Bumble, and Henry Stephenson as the kindly and improbable Mr. Brownlow. As Fagin Alec Guinness has never been better (and he is nearly always magnificent), despite an outrageous and probably uncomfortable putty nose modeled after the familiar Cruikshank illustration. And a very talented young man named John Howard Davies begins what ought to be a long and distinguished acting career as Oliver.

Messrs. Neame and Lean (whose names somehow don't seem to rhyme properly) have had to do considerable cutting here and there. And generally this is all to the good. Since Dickens got paid by the word he was inevitably long-winded. In the movie we are spared the whole ill-conceived robbery episode; and Mrs. Maylie never appears, nor does Miss Rose, who was never much more credible than Elsie Dinsmore anyway. Also, for reasons you'll understand when and if you are allowed to look at the movie, Fagin's painfully detailed execution is gone and so is most of the saccharine ending, in which everybody who deserved it was shown to have lived happily ever after.

With the throwing out of a number of Dickens's less important characters and scenes the emphasis has on occasion been changed. The Artful Dodger is still around at the end, as elusive and promising a juvenile delinquent as ever, and once in a while the violence gets out of hand and is nearly unbearable. For example, after Bill Sikes does away with Nancy there is a long, uncomfortable stream-of-conscience episode for which Gertie Stein is more responsible than C. Dickens. Moreover, I did keep wondering if anyone not familiar with the book would understand the evil presence of Monks or Mr. Brownlow's unusual interest in Oliver or why the workhouse hag's dying words were so vital. But all this doesn't matter too much. The spirit is there all right, just as it was in "Great Expectations."

Admittedly, "Oliver" is not Dickens at his best. On a strictly realistic basis the novel is no more believable than "East Lynne" or almost any of the historical novels on the best-seller lists. Broken down and analyzed, Mr. Dickens's story is hopelessly melodramatic and cluttered with fantastic coincidences, but nobody in his right mind would bother to break down and analyze the plot. Like all great novelists, Dickens created a world of his own, and you accept that world because he is so wonderfully persuasive. So are Lean and Neame.

It would be pleasant to end this review by urging you to hurry over to your local movie theatre and settle down for slightly more than two hours of fine entertainment. Unhappily you can't, not unless you live in one of half a dozen towns in Texas or in Albuquerque, New Mexico. And as this is being written the number of towns in which "Oliver" is to be exhibited has already been reduced by one.

For more than two years the Eagle Lion organization has been trying to set up general distribution in this country without success. The reason? Some, though by no means all, Jewish groups have insisted that Alec Guinness's Fagin is "villainous and repulsive." Other Jewish organizations have supported the right of the picture to be seen as a matter of principle—the principle of free speech and no censorship. On January 4 the National Board of Review passed a resolution opposing "open and covert acts of intimidation, boycott, and arbitrary

* *OLIVER TWIST. Screen play by David Lean and Stanley Haynes, based on the book by Charles Dickens. Directed by Mr. Lean. Produced by Ronald Neame. Presented by J. Arthur Rank. Distributed by Eagle-Lion Classics, Inc. With Robert Newton, Alec Guinness, Kay Walsh, Francis L. Sullivan, Henry Stephenson, Mary Clare, John Howard Davies, and others.*

—From "The Miracle."

—From "Oliver Twist."

Anna Magnani, John Howard Davies, Robert Newton—"the right of people to read, see, and hear . . . without censorship."

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censorship" of "Oliver Twist." It now seems likely that the film will at last be released within the next few weeks since the Motion Picture Association has indicated it will give its official seal of approval—virtually essential to any widespread distribution—if a few minor deletions in the Fagin episodes are made.

Fagin is villainous all right. Repulsive? Maybe; though no more so than such non-controversial figures as Bill Sikes or Monks or Mr. Bumble or Mrs. Corney or Noah Claypool or the Workhouse Master. "Oliver Twist" is populated with black-hearted villains and pure-hearted heroes; Mr. Dickens just didn't bother with delicate shadings in his characterizations.

The issue is precisely whether any individual or group will be allowed to decide what the rest of us can look at or listen to or read. Our long-run answer to that question will be much more far-reaching and fundamental than any single movie or radio broadcast or book. The whole case for the release of this motion picture and the issue involved have never been more brilliantly discussed than by John Mason Brown in *SRL* May 28, 1949.

For the record, I found Mr. Guinness's characterization both restrained and tasteful, compared to the original Fagin. And to date no one has suggested that all copies of the book be gathered up and burned in the public square. At least I hope nobody has or will. I also hope the movie can be generally released in this country. If it isn't we will all be denied a fine evening and, in its way, a work of art.

—MERLE MILLER.

SRL Recommends

Ways of Love: Reviewed in this issue.

Oliver Twist: Reviewed in this issue.

The Halls of Montezuma: Filmed in good but not too glorious technicolor. Shots of actual Marine-Navy maneuvers laced with taut performances into overpowering climax.

Born Yesterday: Billie Dawn gropes hilariously again through ABC's of democracy, with considerable private enterprise.

Harvey: A man with a six-foot-four bun. Not so Fay as original Broadway comedy but still merry.

Breakthrough: Exploits of the infantry-battalion level at St. Lô. Realistically presented—within formula strictures.

King Solomon's Mines: The magnificently photographed jungles and wild animals of Africa serve as background for an exciting adventure story.

Mad Wednesday: Harold Lloyd comes back in a film so funny that you will be in danger of hurting yourself with belly laughs.

TV and Radio

OPERATION LOBOTOMY

SYLVESTER L. Weaver, Jr., vice president in charge of television for the National Broadcasting Company, hates "intellectual" critics: he hates them with "singular directness" and with "a boiling vat of fetid venom" stewing in his heart while, still in his own words, he sits "in my lavish offices with the great NBC stars dropping in to fawn on me, and a bevy of beautiful secretaries put money bags in the chute from my window to the Guaranty Trust Company across the street." Mr. Weaver does his hating in *Variety*'s forty-fifth anniversary issue.

We would prefer to devote this space to consideration of the fresh, imaginative production of "Macbeth" which Peter Frye recently put on for the Columbia Broadcasting System; or the Pulitzer Prize Playhouse production of "The Pharmacist's Mate," which the *New York Herald-Tribune*'s John Crosby calls a "television milestone"; or NBC's competent adventures into TV adaptations of opera; or the Edward R. Murrow-Fred Friendly series, "Hear It Now," comparing it with NBC's "Voices and Events"; or "Challenge of the Fifties," Columbia's intelligent, useful year-end roundup of world affairs.

How cleverly Charlie McCarthy has met television's challenge to Edgar Bergen intrigues us; and we would enjoy musing on Walt Disney's major TV effort, "One Hour in Wonderland," relating it to the Ford Theatre's utterly chaotic production of "Alice in Wonderland." And we saw a sensitive Veterans Administration film on NBC—one of a series—on how Uncle Sam helps former GI's to meet the challenge of impaired hearing.

In fact many radio and TV items rate our readers' attention these days, but this once we are compelled reluctantly to pass them all by and to devote our space to the NBC vice president's assault on "intellectuals."

Mr. Weaver mentions the phrase "the time trap" with particular distaste: that phrase was coined by Norman Cousins, editor of *The Saturday Review of Literature*. This magazine addresses itself to "opinion-leaders." In short, the shoe fits so well it pinches, and we simply cannot resist the urge to place the toe on the seat of Mr. Weaver's rants.

The word "intellectual," according to my Concise Oxford Dictionary, means "a person possessing a good understanding; an enlightened person." Vice presidents of networks are usually very meticulous about what they say in print; so we have every reason to believe what Mr. Weaver says—namely, that he hates enlightened people of good understanding.

NOW that is a serious matter, because by his own admission—"I will take the public any time and you can have the intellectuals"—the veep believes that the majority of American people are unenlightened and do not have a good understanding. Obviously, this cannot be true; Mr. Weaver loves the common man.

He complains that "the critics do not understand mass media and what makes mass media work." He goes on to say, "They are measuring in terms of their own standards and their own beliefs instead of measuring in terms of the facts. . . . The mass media of this country have a record which is easy to check and which contains certain statistical information which can replace opinion with fact." The record of radio and TV is a highly debatable one, as Mr. Weaver knows, otherwise he would not be defending it in such heat. It is Mr. Weaver's right and privilege to defend his record: by virtue of his position he has an obligation to the public to defend his policies in print; but in all fairness he ought not to give the impression that his own opinions are facts—without producing facts to support them.

What is wrong with critics measuring by "their own standards and beliefs"? Surely, Mr. Weaver, you do not expect nor desire all men to measure by your standards and beliefs?

Hate the intellectuals if you must; although you would be serving the American people better if you devoted your prodigious energies to the bold project which you have conceived for NBC-TV, "the tremendous job in increasing the maturity and

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alertness of the American people . . . the cultural horizons of the country . . . the people's knowledge of their own times and of mankind's history by exposure to the great literary works of the past."

That's quite an undertaking you have there: you call it "Operation Frontal-Lobes." Forgive our curiosity, Mr. Weaver, but isn't that a bit on the "intellectual" side for a mass audience? And where did Mr. Weaver get the idea that intellectuals are opposed to "hits," to the "enjoyment of laughter," to the "magnetism" of a great personality, to such box-office smashes as "South Pacific," "Gone With the Wind," and to that "best-seller The Bible"? (all, including the last, non-radio-TV hits).

We have watched NBC's "succession of hits," and when we have liked what we have seen we have said so in no ambiguous terms, paying grateful homage to such comedians-universal as Milton Berle, Groucho Marx, Jimmy Durante, and Sid Caesar, making happy acknowledgment of the better shows on the Kraft Theatre, the Philco Theatre, and so on.

We have also watched the other networks' "successions of hits" and paid ready tribute to their efforts. On the other hand an insufferable item on anyman's network does not get away without our sharp dissents. Would Mr. Weaver kindly tell us what part programs such as these play in his grand design for "accelerating self-realization in viewers?"

We could go on, but space closes in.

Mr. Weaver's job is to produce programs that live up to his own soaring standards. The job of his hated "intellectuals" is to remind vice presidents that Life Wants to Be Beautiful outside the lavish offices of NBC, too, and that Mr. Weaver's judgments of what is good for the American people are not the only useful judgments.

Niles Trammel, chairman of the board of NBC, evidently does not share his vice president's allergy to the word "intellectual." Mr. Trammel writing in the same issue of *Variety* cautions his fellow captains and kings of the broadcasting industry to "make sure television attains its intellectual destiny without hindrance from us . . . to make certain that the television screen is lit in the homes of America with the type of programs that will create an intellectual miracle in the minds of our people."

Perhaps Mr. Weaver ought to earmark some of the money in those bags going down the chute to the Guaranty Trust Company for a special wire from the office of the vice president in charge of television to the office of the chairman of the board.

—Robert Lewis Shayon.

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Music To My Ears

OPERA IN ENGLISH?—PIANO BY GOLDSAND—PAUL PARAY

WHAT might be called a counsel of despair is unpleasantly evident in a recent article in *The New York Times* by Howard Taubman, its music editor, of which the conclusion is: "Balancing the advantages and disadvantages, I would vote for opera in English." The presumption is that in this way opera can find a wider audience in America, and certain vexing problems of finance would be ameliorated.

Here is a prime example of argument for a change which seems to promise progress but which is no more nor less than degeneration. The fallacies in this attitude are almost too numerous to catalogue, but the main ones can be summarized:

1. The problem of opera at the Metropolitan, as it is with other companies in New York and elsewhere, is a trade union problem—that is to say, how the income dollar is divided among a dozen different unions concerned with maintaining a wanted standard of living.

2. The problem of opera at the Metropolitan, certainly, is not a problem of attendance related to the language in which a work is given. Given a suitable cast in any established repertory piece the Metropolitan can be sold out, whatever the work's tongue.

It is a further counsel of despair to instance the example of European companies, such as those of France, Italy, Germany, and Austria, where classics of all nations are heard in the local tongue. In the first place these countries specialize in their *own* repertory, with companies thus organized; in the second place distances are so short that visiting companies come regularly for performances in *their* own language. Without such interchange, we must decide whether we want to propagate opera or bastardize it.

Should the time come when the attitude emerges that the Metropolitan's survival can only be accomplished by abandoning the only worthwhile intellectual concept the house has had for nearly fifty years—performances in *so far as possible* in the original tongue—I am prepared to write finis to its consecutive history and regard it as some kind of giant vaudeville. What may come after may be glamorous, exciting, or profitable, but it will have no more relation to an esthetic bloodline than Salmaggi's expeditious enterprise in the Brooklyn Academy.

I don't think anyone can argue with the thesis that other things being equal the sense and content of a stage work are most sensibly served as the composer conceived them. There are values in the relation of syllables to sounds which cannot be duplicated in another tongue, no matter how clever the manipulation. To argue otherwise is demeaning, for it assumes the composer did not know his own mind.

It would be a helpful contribution and a clarifying one if the present artistic administration of the Metropolitan would state its position on this matter. Even those philosophically opposed to opera in English will concede that a certain kind of opera—especially one with a good deal of dialogue meant to be laughed at—is enhanced by translation. The current "Magic Flute" and "Fledermaus," the City Center's "Love of Three Oranges" are instances.

But the area of disagreement beyond this is vast: shortly we will be having "Fidelio" in German (it was last given in English); within recent memory we have had "Falstaff" in English one year, and in Italian a few years later; likewise "Gianni Schicchi." Surely it should be possible to review the customary repertory and decide which works may benefit from translation, which are marred, which outraged. Then we could judge which way the Metropolitan is headed.

The slap-dash judgment that opera in English is inescapable (thus desirable) is a surrender of basic values to temporary advantage, in which ignorance takes precedence over information and the complacent are awarded priority over the inquisitive. Moreover it isn't even "new;" it failed dismally at the Metropolitan itself fifty years ago, and the American Opera Company for all its excellent translations, bright staging, and able personnel couldn't make it go.

Robert Goldsand—"a subtle irony at work."

* * *

What more than beautiful piano playing does a pianist require to draw an audience to Carnegie Hall? No doubt either an old name or none at all, an established reputation or an enticing anonymity. Since Robert Goldsand, who did the beautiful playing of a recent evening, offers none of these things, his public was distressingly meager.

Despite this physical evidence of unworthiness, Goldsand played the A flat (Opus 26) Sonata of Beethoven with uncommon artistry, the E major Scherzo and five Etudes of Chopin not only with uncommon artistry but also with remarkably sustained pianistic control, warmly appreciative feeling, and a high degree of tonal refinement. A deceptively slight sonatina (No. 1 in E) by the North Carolinian Charles Mills captured the ear for its dexterous patterns and easy integration, though it is shorter than a Chopin Ballade. Goldsand's case commands interest for a subtle irony at work. When he came here as a prodigy of twenty, in the early 1930's, Town Hall was hardly big enough to hold his admirers. Now that his artistry is matured to deserve such honor it is time for his old friends—and as many new ones—to rediscover him.

* * *

For Paul Paray it was a long time between New York appearances when he made his indoor debut with the Philadelphia Orchestra in Carnegie Hall. But the dozen years that have elapsed since he visited the Lewisohn Stadium in the World's Fair year of 1939 have merely intensified the brilliance and refined the subtleties of the art he demonstrated then. The notion that the Philharmonic has been meanwhile treated to the "best" leaders seems more than ever a hollow jest.

Paray's program was half German (Mozart's "Magic Flute" Overture and Beethoven's "Pastorale" Symphony) and half French (Ravel's "La Valse," the Suite from Fauré's "Pelléas" music, and Dukas's "Sorcerer's Apprentice"), but all music, all virtuosity of thought and execution. The orchestra played as if possessed by Paray's rhythmic aliveness, his wonderful sense of color, his zestful enthusiasm. He did all this with his right arm in a sling; a recent fall on the ice had broken a wrist bone.

—IRVING KOLODIN.

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Ideas on Film

Eyewitnessing the World of the 16mm Motion Picture

SRL FILM REFERRAL LIBRARIES

EDITOR'S NOTE: *To assist our readers in their efforts to obtain the films mentioned in these columns, this department recently sent a questionnaire to all known 16mm.-film libraries in the country checking on their resources and facilities. As a result we are able to publish this list of 215 film libraries which have expressed a special interest in helping* Saturday Review *readers, either by supplying them directly with the films they want or by helping locate the films from another library or from the major distributors.*

Readers should keep the following facts in mind:

1. Public libraries with film collections, without exception, serve only their own town or county. Therefore if you are not eligible to hold a library card do not ask for film service.

2. University and commercial film libraries in general ship films to renters in their state and surrounding district. Most commercial libraries also sell and rent projection equipment.

Best use of this list is assured if readers will select two or three nearby libraries to consult and compare. The list was prepared with the assistance of Lillian Wachtel, and additional copies are available upon request.

—CECILE STARR,
Editor, IDEAS ON FILM.

ALABAMA
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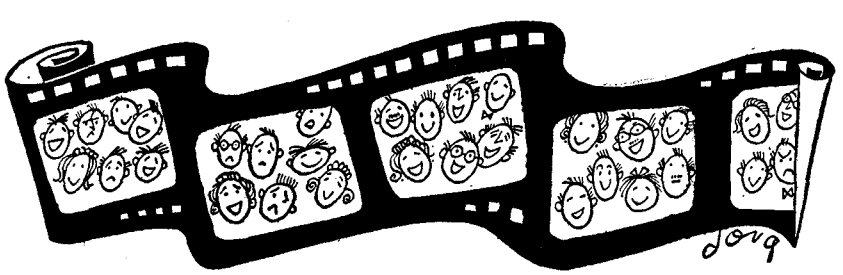

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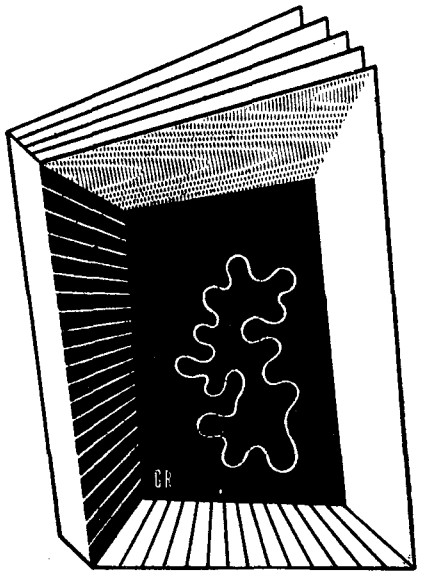

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Southern Visual Films, 686 Shrine Bldg. tel. 8-4870 (N. Bernstein)

Nashville — Methodist Publishing House, 810 Broadway. tel. 42-1621 (D. B. James)

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Ideal Pictures, 4000 Ross Ave. TAylor 0821 (John Gunstream)

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University of Utah, Extension Division. tel. 4-1951 (Mrs. Julienne Slaughter)

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National Film Service, 202 E. Cary St. tel. 22808 (Mrs. Virginia Taylor, C. A. Majure)

WASHINGTON

Ellenburg—Central Washington College of Education, Office of Visual Education. tel. 2-1496 (Ruth Mazanti)

Pullman—State College of Washington, Audio-Visual Center. tel. 3361 or 17501 (Leonard Paine, Herbert Hite)

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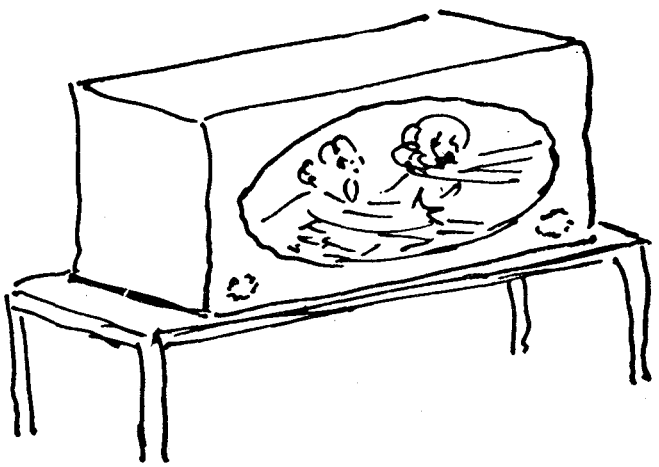

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Morgantown—West Virginia University Library, Audio Visual Aids Department (Robert York)

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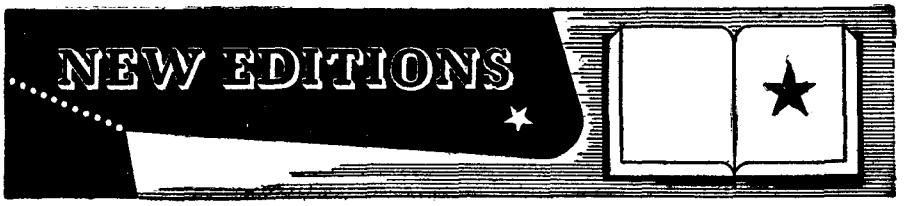
Photoart Visual Service, 840-44 N. Plankinton Ave. tel. MA 8-0396, MA 8-7680 (Roa Kraft Birch)
Racine—Racine Public Library, 701 Main St. tel. 3-8281 (Frederick Wezeman)
Sheboygan—Mead Public Library, 709 Seventh St. tel. 5583 (Marie Barkman)

WYOMING
Laramie — University of Wyoming, Wyoming Film Library. tel. 4851, ext. 270 (Mrs. Rosemary Carpenter)

Lack of Money Is Still

By Howard Griffin

LISTEN how all day long the tide
increases covering the shore
making of land a final waste
happy to gulls who in the sunset seem
like swans.
—Enough to hear
the sniping wind, the ballet bird;
one cannot doubt the happiness
of being alone with moths for now
fine words have lethal wings,
phrases hide hurt even here
even by this inlet lost
where light renews the green of waves.
—*wonderful that Caen*
was scarcely touched said Mrs. Brett.
Where no voice
calls—(tarred rope, dead moss)—
and no time hurts
like rotten treasures I amass
the singing of a cricket thin
with cold and
slanting fields remaindered to the crows;
no life except a leaf red-handselled to the sea.
I watch the sun go down
like *Temeraire*. Pile the white logs
upon the hearth. Salute the fly.
How good a thing it is to listen.



IN "FLAUBERT and Madame Bovary" (Farrar, Straus & Young, $4), first published in 1939, Francis Steegmuller has told the story of Flaubert's stormy liaison with Louise Colet, his Eastern travels with Maxime Du Camp, his friendships with Alfred Le Poittevin and Louis Bouilhet, his feverish composition of the original version of "Saint Anthony," and his laborious building of "Bovary." Flaubert's childhood and youth are glanced at, and a brief afterword carries the tale of his life to its conclusion.

Mr. Steegmuller has made good use of his sources. Indeed, at least two-thirds of his narrative must consist of quotation and paraphrase; the fifty pages devoted to "The Oriental Journey" are entirely filled with excellent translations from Flaubert's letters and travel notes and Du Camp's "Souvenirs Littéraires." But Mr. Steegmuller has managed his materials with knowledge, good judgment, and skill; and there is no doubt that Flaubert's myriad letters are the best guide to an understanding of the strange, divided, troubled character from which his writings came. A small library has been written on Flaubert, but those who have read their way through it will agree, I think, that the depths of the subject have not even now been fully explored. Mr. Steegmuller does not pretend to have said the last word. His book has been made for readers to whom the French scurces are closed, and it has been well made. Louise Colet, no less than her lover, is alive in its pages. So is the mother who held her son on so tight a sentimental rein. Full justice is done to Louis Bouilhet's importance as a literary aid and arbiter in Flaubert's life, while a little less than justice is done to Flaubert's reciprocal role. Le Poittevin is given his proper place in the story, but the early influence of Ernest Chevalier is ignored.

"Madame Bovary" has appeared in English in many editions, both mean and handsome. If you are looking for one of the latter I recommend the Heritage Press edition ($5). The translation is by J. Lewis May, the illustrations by Pierre Brissaud have been engraved in wood by Théo Schmied, and there is a foreword by Jacques de Macretelle.

"Bovary," in 1857, revealed the possibilities of realistic fiction. Forty-two years later Frank Norris showed the way to American naturalistic writers with "McTeague," now available in the useful series of Rinehart editions (75¢). The power, animation, and rightness of the best portions of this book are extraordinary and enduring, while its lapses into melodrama and falsity are nearly incredible. "McTeague" lives on, not only by virtue of its own vitality, but also in the pages of hundreds of other novels, for it was a seminal work. It was also, in Alfred Kazin's words quoted by Carvel Collins in his introduction, "one of the great works of the modern American imagination."

Other titles recently added to Rinehart Editions are Sterne's "Tristram Shandy," Smollett's "Humphry Clinker," "Selected Prose" by Washington Irving, Hardy's "The Return of the Native," "Selected Prose and Poetry" by Stephen Crane, "Selected Tales and Poems" by Herman Melville" (75¢ each); and three sound anthologies — "Colonial American Writing," edited by Roy Harvey Pearce, "Literature of the Early Republic," edited by Edwin H. Cady, and "Poetry of the New England Renaissance, 1790-1890," edited by George F. Whicher. Mr. Pearce has chosen judiciously from a body of literature that is in large measure unattractive to the average reader of today. Mr. Cady has intermixed his familiar selections with comparatively little-read items, such as a chapter from Mercy Warren's "History of the American Revolution," Benjamin Rush's "The Influence of Physical Causes Upon the Moral Faculty," and Royall Tyler's pioneer American comedy "The Contrast." Mr. Whicher's anthology contains, almost inevitably, quite a bit of mediocre verse. Lowell's "To the Spirit of Keats" is a good example of the magniloquent trash that we piously preserve; but on the other hand Christopher Pearse Cranch proves himself a better poet than some who are far more famous.

Recent Signet Books (25¢ each) include Farrell's "The Young Manhood of Studs Lonigan," James M. Cain's "The Moth," and—for those who can read it—"Forever Amber" (Double Signet, 50¢). New Bantams (25c) are Mrs. Roosevelt's "This Is My Story," Rostand's "Cyrano," W. R. Burnett's "High Sierra," and Bill Mauldin's "Up Front." —BEN RAY REDMAN.

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FICTION

(Continued from page 16)

fresh and undiluted. There is a chuckle on almost every page.

The scene is Charleston, South Carolina, in 1914, when the conflict just beginning in Europe seemed less important than the memory of the Confederacy. The story has a simple framework and leisurely tempo but its interest is constant. It deals with some eight months in the life of Henri Lemay, a little man with a big bass voice and a bigger reputation for honesty. Henri's struggle to keep his niece Leonie from making what he considers a disastrous marriage, his own snail-paced courtship, his brief excursion into a career of rat-catching, and his eye-opening encounter with a glib promoter are facetious but above all human. Leonie, whose four years at college have given her an outlook wider than that of her family, throws a tantrum or two but on the whole is a refreshingly level-headed heroine. Best of all, the redoubtable Miss Julie Gerard, who figured to so much purpose in "Pride's Way," is back again, paradoxical and delightful as ever. "Pound Foolish" is full of the stuff of everyday life a few decades ago, transmuted by discerning humor into a roundly entertaining tale.

—Beatrice St. J. Ravenel.

THE PEPPER TREE. By John Jennings. Little, Brown. $3. Fans of John Jennings's historical romances will undoubtedly find his eighth novel up to par but new readers are not likely to run out searching for the previous seven after reading "The Pepper Tree." New writers find their manuscripts rejected by publishers because their plots "verge on the melodramatic" and their characters are not "rounded, living people." Yet authors of Mr. Jennings's experience display the same immaturity and find their books between hard covers annually.

The romance between seaman Jem Shaw and Jessie Ames is begun with little fanfare. They collide accidentally in the street, Jem kisses her and not an hour later proposes marriage. Jessie's cruel stepfather, however, marries her off to the evil captain of the *Java*, Shubael Coit, who knows the secret of the pepper island. Jem ships aboard Coit's vessel to discover the location of the island for a group of competitors and finds the beautiful Jessie an unhappy passenger and virtual prisoner of her husband. Though Coit learns of their brief romance he is unaware that Jem is the father of Jessie's unborn child. When they finally reach Kuala Lampok, the pepper island, its ruler, Atam Datu, manages to outdo Coit in wickedness and cunning. His double-dealing leads to war between his own people and the *Java*'s crew. The amazing Mr. Shaw defies death a dozen times before rescuing Jessie from the clutches of Coit and Datu and sailing the *Java* back to America, full of love and pepper.

—Joseph M. Grant.

THE CIRCLE OF THE MINOTAUR. By Stuart Hood. Viking. $2.50. In a recent book Count Carlo Sforza stressed those traits in the Italian character which tend towards humanism and humaneness. The accuracy of this judgment has been lately confirmed by several Italian novels. American and English novelists writing about postwar Italy have caught the same human note, as if that were the one thing that really mattered.

Thus it is something like a cry of despair that we hear in this beautifully written, all-too-human story of a man doomed to bear the cross of a lie not his own but which after a lapse of many years has become a legend impossible to break. It so happened that in the days of Mussolini a rich and oppressive Fascist landowner was shot, and by circumstantial evidence the guilt was put on the fifteen-year-old peasant boy Carlo, who did not deny it but fled the country.

As an ardent anti-Fascist Carlo Pacini fought in Spain; he also joined the partisans in France who harried

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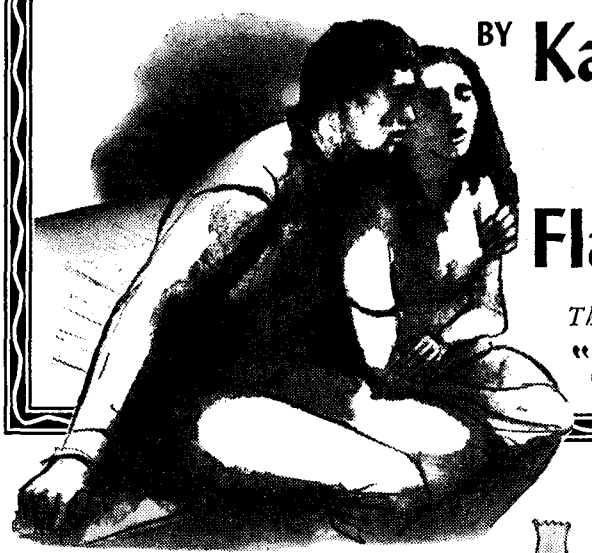

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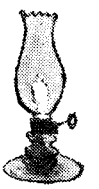
THE FAITH of Mrs. Kelleen



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—*Saturday Review of Literature*

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the Germans. After the Liberation, weary of fighting and eager to resume the life of a peasant in his own country, he returns to find that he has barely missed the carabinieri, who but the day before in the expectation of his return were seeking him in his native village to arrest him for the crime committed so many years ago. His fellow villagers, while convinced he had done the murder, are only too eager to shield him, since after all he had shot a common enemy of theirs, and his crime was a thing of glory. He gives up the effort of enlightening them; it would indeed be useless. There is but one person who will believe him, the girl he loves. Whether it is because the truth robs him of the role of hero is not made clear, but it is she who will ultimately betray him. There is no escaping the dilemma. Guilty or not guilty, human nature takes its toll of victims of unfortunate accidents of a circumstantial kind. The mood of violence fills the picture, but it is passionately decried by a writer who does not forget that it is form, and form alone, that makes his cry vocal without tinging it with propaganda. —JOHN COURNOS.

IT'S ONLY TEMPORARY. By Charles Mergendahl. Doubleday. $3. There are 5,000 houses in Camptown, which is divided into sections, but all houses in each section are exactly alike. It is one of those developments designed, implacably, for the young men who, having fought in World War II, are eligible for GI loans. Among the occupants of these houses are the Cousinses, the Morrises, the McDermots, the Silers, and the Littles—youthful couples with widely assorted ambitions and dreams. Oddly enough none of these ambitions and dreams are centered on the washing machines, the colored bathroom fixtures, or the shrubbery considered standard equipment for each house. The Cousins look toward Montana, the Silers covet a small farm; the McDermots want children.

Unfortunately Mr. Mergendahl's young people suffer from the same multiplicity of detail that afflicts the housing development. The confused reader, essaying to follow their tangled lives, becomes involved in a large scale real estate project to the detriment of his interest in the tenants as human beings. There are too many people, just as there are too many houses; with the best of intentions the author's treatment of them is confined to the surface, again like the architectural emphasis. This will be a source of disappointment to those who would like to know a couple of the nice young couples in the endless parade of couples, could they be separated from the general mass.

—JOSEPHINE LAWRENCE.

Your Literary I.Q.

By Howard Collins

TEN FAMOUS SCHOOL TEACHERS

Even though you never took a lesson from them you should remember very well the ten pedagogues who are briefly described below. You'll find the answers on page 40.

1. Master of Salem House, he always spoke in a fierce whisper and was fond of caning the chubbier boys.
2. He taught a night school class in beginning English for the foreign-born citizens of New York City.
3. His rival in love frightened him out of the country by playing upon his superstitions.
4. Though he suffered the misfortunes of war, was hanged for heresy, and became a galley slave he lived through all his troubles and remained an incurable optimist.
5. For three generations he taught Latin at the Brookfield school for boys.
6. Proprietor of Dotheboys Hall, he combined lessons in spelling with practical applied philosophy.
7. He quit teaching French when the German army occupied Alsace-Lorraine.
8. On Examination Evening, with the help of a cat and the sign painter's apprentice, his pupils revenged themselves on this stern schoolmaster.
9. By singing psalms at the top of his voice during an Indian massacre this singing teacher saved himself and two girls he was protecting, for the Indians thought—not without some justification—that he was crazy.
10. Calling upon Sherlock Holmes with the news that one of his pupils had been kidnapped this schoolmaster dramatically collapsed upon the bearskin rug in front of the fireplace.

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BOOKED for TRAVEL

PARADISE A LA HONGROISE

THE WAY most men get ties for Christmas, that's the way we get calendars. They've reached us from every railroad short of the Virginia and Truckee. We have in hand date-reminders that show pictures of Waikiki Beach, the Taj Mahal in full color, and there is one around full of naked Zulus sent on by the Union of South Africa. But the calendar we least expected was the one that arrived from the Magyar Idegenforgalmi Tajekoztoto Iroda, which as anyone can see at a glance is the name for Hungarian tourist office. It cost 101 forints to make its way here. Besides the calendar, which has a colored cover showing a bridge across the gray Danube, the envelope contained a folder on sport in Hungary and a greeting card which said "Happy New Year."

Since this was the first communication we've received from the East-side gang in many a moon we looked it over as if it were a flying-saucer man. We should like to report that the whole business is spiral bound (yes, they have *that*, too), and that each week is given one full page. Every day is subdivided in the Socialist republic of Hungary into thirteen blocks—from eight in the morning until nine at night and that includes Sundays. We haven't the vaguest idea whether Sundays are still holidays in Hungary, but anyway they are lettered in red whereas ordinary days are in black.

On each weekly page there is a photograph which I gather intends to illustrate the new Hungary. The week of January 1 to 7 for example shows the Liberation Memorial in Budapest, the week of January 8 to 14 the Workers' Alpine Health Resort at Kekes. January 29 through March 4 is embellished by the Worker's Parliament Building and the week after by the Memorial of the Heroic Soviet Aviators in Budapest. The weeks slip by with photos of girl tractor drivers and one called "Yachting—Workers' Pastime" until we get to midsummer. August 6 through 12 is marked by a photo of a sidewalk stall with the sign "Yoghurt." The caption gives it the label of that decadent, capitalistic enterprise the Milk Bar. Along about the middle of December there is a picture of a Workers' Apartment House, and, believe me, the new Caribé Hilton in San Juan has nothing on it.

The booklet called "Sport in Hungary" is just chock-a-block with photographs of girls playing volley ball; of men rowing, playing ping-pong or football; men fencing, cycling, pole vaulting, throwing the discus, the hammer—as a matter of fact doing everything but getting in there and pitching for the People's Socialist Hungarian Government.

The text is rather interesting and we thought you would enjoy reading parts of it. It begins:

> In the 1890's and in the early part of the twentieth century was *modern sport*—which followed the classic Greek and Roman examples—born. It soon made great headway and, becoming popular all over the world, it roused an ever growing interest and attracted more followers. Hungary was one of the first countries to realize the importance of sport in modern life and the significant role it was to play.
>
> After this Hungarian sport life advanced rapidly, but sport still remained the prerogative of the privileged few, the distinguished pastime of the ruling feudal-capitalistic Hungary. Sport was unattainable even for the most talented individuals of the people. Only football, cycling, and tourism formed an exception. These sports were available to the broader masses and became, so to speak, people's sports. The management of football however soon fell into the clutches of profit-hungry businessmen.

Well, in the later pages of the folder was more propaganda put—following the typical Soviet line—in. The booklet adds that after the liberation everything started anew, with the help of course of the Soviet Union and the Three Year Plan. "Sport is no longer the exclusive pastime of the privileged but belongs to the whole people," is the way "Sport in Hungary" sums up the present athletic situation on the playing fields of Budapest.

DELEGATES to the World University Summer Games held in Hungary last year were reputed, according to the folder, to have "enjoyed the sights of rebuilt, beautiful Budapest, the abundantly filled shop windows, the well-being, the cheerfulness of the city, and the splendid sports events—in one word, the Hungary of the working people."

There were some people who "did not understand our people's democratic system," it points out. "They rumored that the new program, the development of mass sport, would lower the quality of sport." Just the op-

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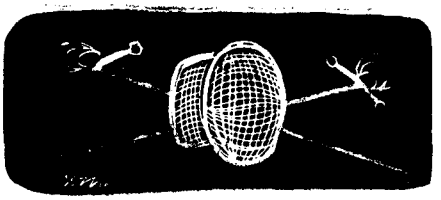

posite has happened, the folder assures the English speaking world, and Hungarian sport is on its way to becoming "a Great Power." For one thing, athletes practising for important competitions are now assigned to training camps. The old pleasure spots "where in the past regime financiers, sharks, and aristocrats amused themselves are now the holiday resorts of the working people where the ace sportsmen prepare for the great international contests."

This insight into the new Hungary, comrades, has been brought to us through the courtesy of one Béla Lukács, or so says a little note at the back of the booklet, which reads, "Responsible: Béla Lukács."

The same little notation with Mr. Lukács's name is printed in the back of the 1951 calendar which the Magyar Idegenforgalmi Tajekoztoto Iroda boys sent to us for the new year. There are those in Budapest who may think that Mr. Lukács ought to be congratulated for a handsome job, but if we were the commissar in charge of seeing that the people's money was not being poured down the sink-hole we'd have Mr. Lukács tied to the rack. No American has been permitted to travel to Hungary since the Magyars clapped Robert Vogeler of the American Telephone and Telegraph in the local jail.

A printer friend of ours has informed us that these spiral-bound calendars couldn't have cost Lukács less than thirty-five cents each of the workers' hard-earned forints. And that doesn't take into account that other 101 forints that responsible old Lukács spent for postage.

—HORACE SUTTON.

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TRAVELERS' TALES

OUR COUNTRY'S NATIONAL PARKS. By Irving Robert Melbo. Bobbs Merrill. Vol. I, $3.50; Vol. II, $3. Not guides to the national parks but rather a short history of each of the Federal areas, threaded with a number of anecdotes both ancient and current. There are some easy-to-understand explanations of such scientific phenomena as geysers and bubbling pots. Each volume has a few simple maps and a liberal sprinkling of photographs mostly picked up from the National Park Service and the publicity departments of the Western railroads. There is no attempt at regionalization in the respective books. Volume one covers such widely separated areas as Yellowstone and Shenandoah and volume two skips from Mount McKinley to Hawaii, which is just about as separated as you can get.

THE LOS ANGELES BOOK. Photographs by Max Yavno. Text by Lee Shippey. Houghton Mifflin $5. Follows the earlier and successful "San Francisco Book," using the same format of words and pictures combined and integrated for double effect. "The sprawling hodgepodge of adobe and chromium and steel" receives an average of 13,000 homeseekers every month, and it is a good thing for L.A. that they don't all stay. Lee Shippey tosses in some painless history and runs through the highpoints of Los Angeles's problems with water, oil, education, and Hollywood. He mixes in both the seamy side and the nutsy side, two of the city's exposed flanks. Mr. S. writes a column for the *Los Angeles Times*. Max Yavno's photographs are often more documentary than imaginative and reflect more craftsmanship than artistry, but they fill the bill very nicely and have been rather well reproduced. —H. S.

SINCLAIR LEWIS

(*Continued from page 8*)

of his Nobel Prize in Literature. He was motoring up to Vermont with me for the summer in the farmhouse he had taken with his second wife, Dorothy Thompson, the brilliant journalist and only human being I had ever seen who could talk Lewis down. I had picked him up at his house at Bronxville. "I can't leave the medal here," he said. "Everybody loves gold. How about giving it to the Yale Library?"

I thought that was a splendid idea, and in our combined innocence neither of us had sense enough to know that that was not the way to present anything of value to a great university. There should have been letters, an exchange of compliments, a committee at the New Haven station, and a banquet in Lewis's honor. Besides we were not dressed for it; we looked like a pair of tramps, and Lewis had had too much to drink the night before and showed it. But he was immensely cheerful on the way up the Post Road, embroidering in his best manner the shocked surprise, delight, and admiration with which Dr. Rush, the librarian, would greet us. It was to be done with the greatest modesty, as if he had Nobel medals to hand out every day, and I was to make a short speech of introduction while Lewis flashed the gold platter before Rush's eyes.

Well, it was a shock most certainly, but it was delivered to the wrong parties. We waited on a marble bench, Lewis with increasing impatience. "Don't you suppose he knows who I am?" he muttered. When we were admitted to the presence there was a man at a desk who resembled a distinguished librarian sitting at his desk. He looked impatient, I thought, for his lunch and the football game later.

The dialogue went something like this. Dr. Rush: "What can I do for you gentlemen?" Considering our travel-stained appearance, that was polite of him. I made my little speech. "Dr. Rush, this is Sinclair Lewis, and I am an editor of Harcourt, Brace, his publishers. We have come to Yale from which we have both graduated to give you for your great library—" at this point Lewis flashed the gold medal, which looked as large around as a grapefruit, in front of the astonished man's eyes and I added at the perfect moment—"the medal of the Nobel Prize in Literature."

The performance was perfect theatre but, like some of Lewis's dramatic adventures later, it was a complete

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failure. "Are you interested in our collection of medals?" Rush said. "I can have you taken to see them." At that point Lewis blew up. I had never seen him so mad. The librarian would not be convinced, nor did he ever look at what was under his nose. We left, we fled down the marble stairs, and drove in silence for the next fifty miles. Lewis deposited the medal that summer with the Vermont Historical Society as a temporary loan, and it is now on permanent exhibit in the Yale Library, along with most of his manuscripts.

WHEN Lewis's second marriage ended, the problem of companionship, of having somebody close to him became increasingly difficult. He moved restlessly around the country—a cottage in Stockbridge, a hotel apartment in New York, then one in Hollywood, a huge duplex on Central Park West, a city mansion that had once belonged to a millionaire in Duluth in his home state, and finally the great house called Thorvale Farm near Williamstown. There a few of his friends came to se him, Bennett Cerf, Carl Van Doren, and others, but it was too far from New York for people who had offices to return to Monday. He had restored, decorated, and furnished the house, the farm down the hill was brought out of decrepitude, the farmer's house rebuilt, and the barns newly roofed and filled with cattle and farm machinery. He owned the mountain in back, a tennis court on which he could never play, and a guest house he did not need.

For years he had been adding to his large collection of books, and I often wondered if what appeared to be his passion for large dwellings was not the result of wanting space and a background for his library. His was a highly complex personality, but his needs were essentially simple. The one commodity he could not buy was companionship. All but his close friends he drove away from him, for he could not endure the casual, inane remarks that pass for conversation among most people. He would leap upon some innocent comment about the weather or his six-toed cat like a hawk swooping on a terrified rabbit. The polite people of Duluth, delighted to have in their midst a celebrated genius, finally shunned his house; and since he so often used people he met as objects of satire for his next book it was not astonishing that the college group in Williamstown considered Thorvale Farm an ogre's castle.

It is remarkable how little he had to do with the writers of the Thirties who were making a stir in the world. In one of his books Thomas Wolfe records a meeting with someone who could only have been Lewis; but Steinbeck, Hemingway, Scott Fitzgerald, and the critics of the time, though he knew their books, were almost strangers to him. I can't remember meeting in his apartment in New York a single one of this vital group. In reading recently the biography of Scott Fitzgerald I discovered that Lewis's name and his work

FRASER YOUNG'S
LITERARY CRYPT: No. 397

A cryptogram is writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle. Answer No. 397 will be found in the next issue.

RALIEGH EL FSEAG

FGMC EGPEHAGTA FS

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Answer to Literary Crypt No. 396

Jealousy is cruel as the grave; the coals thereof are coals of fire.
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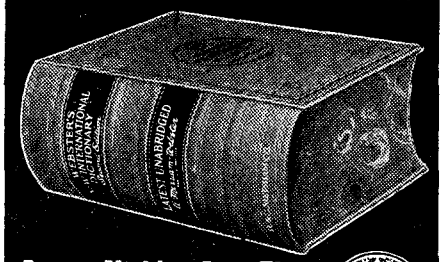

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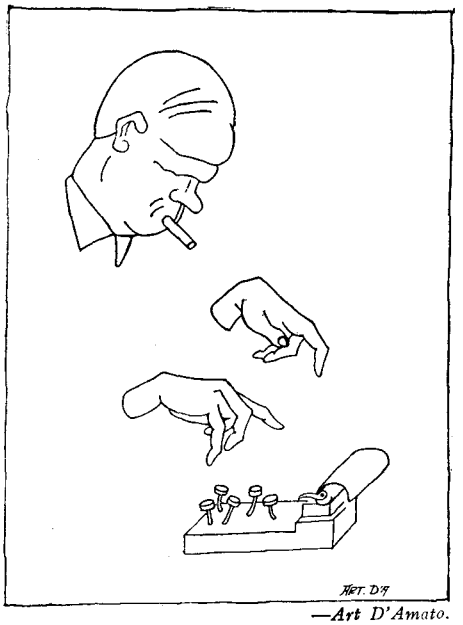
After his powerful outburst against Fascism in "It Can't Happen Here," in which Dorothy Thompson and their Vermont farm had a share, he let public events take their course. I have always thought that the death of his son Wells in the war, though he rarely mentioned him, was a secret wound which he concealed even from himself. Wells was a strikingly handsome young man who was turning into a brilliant journalist and had published a novel just before he was killed. A friend of mine who met Lewis at Grand Central after he had heard the appalling news told me that his face was blank and expressionless, his answers to the gentlemen of the press courteous but curt. Wells Lewis might have been only a name of someone he remotely remembered. Another and almost a final object of human love and affection had been torn from him. This was Lewis revealing the stoicism which he inherited from ten generations of New England farmers. You can find his like on the bleak farms among the hills of New Hampshire and Vermont—the high cheekbones, the lofty forehead, the long, bony hands, the clear and shrewd eyes of his ancestors.

The time has come when those who have known Lewis must gather together their thoughts and memories of him. The biographer who will finally write of this strange, tragic, and yet inspiring life will need them. He was not a letter-writer or a keeper of journals; no one has recorded his highest moments of elation when the magic words of eloquence and satire poured out of him in a flood. I remember telling him once that he had allowed a whole chapter of his next novel to come out of his mouth. William Rose Benét knew his earlier



—*Art D'Amato.*

"...the lofty forehead...the shrewd eyes."

life and his adventures as a young writer in Carmel, California; and Carl Van Doren, whose extraordinarily accurate memory and retentive mind matched Lewis's, might have contributed to this biography; but unhappily both of these old friends died during the last year.

It is likely that of all of his old friends Alfred Harcourt, who had helped him to fame so confidently and ably in the dead years, had the last long meetings with him, in Harcourt's home in Santa Barbara. "I had warm and intimate visits with him here for a month about two years ago," he has written me. And then he adds, "He was good for us, and I think we were good for him. Bless his memory. He really cared." I think, too, that he cared more deeply for his friends and the few he loved than he allowed himself to tell in words. I hope we were good for him. But I wish, and how deeply, that there had been more of us.

The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

Title and Author	*Crime, Place, and Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
THE CASE OF THE PURLOINED PICTURE *Christopher Bush* (Macmillan: $2.50)	Queer goings-on in British village involve vacationing Ludovic Travers in riddles re stolen antiques and church pilferings — and finally murder.	Chess-puzzle type plus some erudition and plausible characters; but sleuth's speculations and endless anecdotal asides make cold-molasses pace.	Fuddy-duddy, but O.K.
MURDER FOR THE HOLDAYS *Howard Rigsby* (Morrow: $2.50)	Crusading San Francisco columnist Jack Holiday and gorgeous wife find guest who can't go home—she's dead. Police and Jack delve fast and tough into gang snarl.	Smoking - wisecrack - and-gun school with more sense than most despite complications and killings too thick to mention.	Exciting —but synthetic

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BELLES-LETTRES

(*Continued from page 13*)

ied, including several of Aubrey Beardsley's satanic drawings, Sargent's fine pencil sketch of James, and Sickert's washy impressionistic portraits. In all it is an admirable volume and makes one pine for the yellow books of yesteryear.

A SEASON IN HELL. By Arthur Rimbaud. Translated by Norman Cameron. Macdonald & Co., N. Y. $3.05. In its opening section Rimbaud calls his great prose poem "these few hideous leaves from my diary of a damned soul." His confession, which he presents to "dear Satan," is an astonishing document. Historically it is a prime monument of the symbolist movement in France. At the same time, although it was written more than seventy-five years ago, it coruscates with the vitality and immediacy of a work of art produced today—or the day after tomorrow. In it the poet in his essential role as seer and prophet explores the problems of sin, religion, life, and reality. The new translation of the poem by Mr. Cameron, himself a poet, is extraordinarily good. He exercises enough freedom to make his version sound like poetry, and enough faithfulness (the original is printed opposite) to retain a literal transcript of Rimbaud's meaning. One might say—the highest praise for a translation—that had Rimbaud written in English his poem would have been like Mr. Cameron's version. It is distinctly superior to Louise Varèse's (New Directions), whose pious word-for-word translation often fails to convey the vernacular flavor and the jaunty fervor of the original. This new edition is illustrated by eight full-page, colored lithographs by Keith Vaughan. They are a superb complement to a superb translation.

JAMES THOMSON (B. V.) A Critical Study. By Imogene B. Walker. Cornell University Press, Ithaca. $2.50. Not to be confused with James Thomson the eighteenth-century nature poet of "The Seasons," nor with Francis Thompson, the Catholic poet of "The Hound of Heaven," here is James Thomson—or, as he signed himself, B. V. (Bysshe Vanolis, after Shelley and Novalis). He is a tragically powerful poet, his personality torn by pessimism and dipsomania. "But I strode on austere / No hope could have no fear," he wrote in "The City of Dreadful Night." It is a poem whose grim grandeur arises out of his pessimism and that unrelenting mood he owed to his "secularism," the least complacent answer to the Victorian spiritual dilemma. What sort of study does such a figure deserve? Certainly not the pedestrian performance we have here. Miss Walker has a few new facts as well as all the old ones embellished with cautious emendations. But her study suffers from two faults. She treats both the life and works concurrently, and although that may seem logical it is tiresome to be stopped in the narrative while a poem or essay is carefully and pedantically explicated. The other fault is simply that the writing, though earnest and intelligent, is unrelievedly stodgy. Thomson will have to wait for his literary resurrection, or perhaps his poetry, stories, and essays tell all that is worth knowing about him.

THE NEW REPUBLIC. By W. H. Mallock. Edited by J. Max Patrick. University of Florida Press, Gainesville. $4.50. This book, subtitled "Culture, Faith, and Philosophy in an English Country House," is the product of Mallock's student days at Oxford. Published in 1877, it remains the best known of all his works. It is a series of long animated conversations, with a few sermons, at a party where guests of assorted opinions contribute to a Platonic symposium on their ideal republic. It is certainly not a novel, yet there is constant excitement in the clash of ideas set forth with such brilliant dialectic, satire, epigram, and parody. Most of the personalities who serve as mouthpieces are faintly disguised figures of the period, among them Matthew Arnold, Thomas Huxley, Tyndall, Jowett; the most admired of all is Ruskin, who praised the faithfulness of his benign portrait, and the most detested is Pater, who later wrote "Marius the Epicurean" to vindicate his malignant caricature. (Lady Ambrose, a delightful worldly-naive character, remarks of Pater, "He always seems to talk of everybody as if they had no clothes on.")

A week end with nothing but conversation—especially of such sustained, polished wit and of such frequent fun—is apt to be fatiguing, but the reader need not take it at one sitting. The other weakness is that there is too much parody, especially of Pater, which loses its sting through repetition. But "The New Republic" is most definitely worth (re)reading. The intellectual and spiritual dilemmas of the 1870's are still with us today though they are no longer argued

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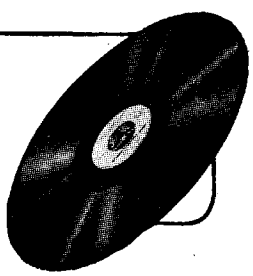

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with such passion and incisiveness. Professor Patrick's editing is exemplary in all ways, and his success in finding the sources of the characters and ideas shows how clearly the book mirrors its period.

BUSHMAN STORIES. By E. W. Thomas. Oxford University Press. $1.50. This little collection of tales makes enchanting reading. Mr. Thomas has translated into limpid and expressive English the stories related to him in the Nama dialect by an old survivor of the Bushman culture of South West Africa. There are twenty-nine altogether, brief and sharply pointed. Most of them concern Heiseb, the god of the Bushmen, who, with all his cleverness and supernatural gifts, is not always victorious against his enemies or against his own too-human weaknesses.

In general the tales are built upon common folklore motifs, and it is interesting to see how the setting of the veld and the bush has affected their characters and settings. Among the nature and beast fables one tale explains why the zebra has stripes on his back and why the baboon has a bare spot where he sits down. The porcupine and the jackal enact the same didactic little drama as the tortoise and the hare. In other tales the jackal plays the wickedly shrewd part that the fox does in European folklore, and for his wickedness is usually rewarded with failure or death. These moral parables, whether about animals, insects, or humans (among whom there is hardly any distinction), often contain illuminating folk wisdom; one of them concludes: "So is it now said in the land, that faith may be in children, and wisdom not in age."

As an example of book-making this is an extremely tasteful and attractive job (made in South Africa). The handsome typography, illustrations, and covers enhance the simple multi-leveled tales. —ROBERT HALSBAND.

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By Elizabeth S. Kingsley

DEFINITIONS	WORDS
A. A portion of the coast of N.A. so called by Norse explorers, c. 1000 A.D.	161 46 5 144 184 99 109
B. To reveal by signs, as fear.	10 187 176 69 61 27 37
C. Peak, Black Hills, S. Dakota, where Borglum carved faces of four former Presidents of U.S., 1927-41.	140 145 14 48 35 72 190 55
D. Plucked or pulled off.	31 142 17 160 85 91 82
E. Norwegian novelist and playwright (1872- ; "The Great Hunger," etc.).	50 123 86 192 32
F. Highest peak in Canadian Rockies, 12,972 feet, British Columbia.	97 58 164 178 100 13
G. Edged by convex semicircles or arcs (her.).	120 6 68 98 47 106 134 88
H. A specimen of a species collected in the locality where the original type was found (zool.).	104 118 113 171 8 64 148 162
I. American journalist, legislator, writer, creator of "Chimmie Fadden" (1855-1942).	19 180 1 42 121 95 73 76
J. Character in "Tom Jones".	24 107 126 44 7 181 15 59 141
K. Between the eyebrows (anat.).	105 173 133 2 16 28 182 155 127 96 54 165
L. One who held the now obsolete theory that all rocks of earth's crust were formed by water (geol.).	193 22 114 110 53 75 84 170 101

DEFINITIONS	WORDS
M. To deign.	158 49 87 130 45 70 4 125 186
N. Present in a minor amount and not essential as a constituent (petrog.).	143 11 194 108 51 67 41 79 156
O. An elegy, mournful ballad, or dirge.	154 112 90 195 63 179
P. SE peninsula of Asia comprising Siam, Burma, etc. (comp.).	34 92 163 12 128 119 177 151 78
Q. To receive with favor.	168 52 122 146 23 39
R. The "Holy City" (Bib.; 2 wds.).	169 102 94 57 189 25 62 147 149 33 81 135
S. A dupe.	129 137 159 185
T. Playful term of endearment (French; 2 wds.).	136 174 20 36 117 183 83 111 153
U. Domestic, of a country.	191 60 93 157 9 66 139 30
V. To turn the head of a vessel to the wind.	115 29 152 172
W. Robed.	89 131 77 103 167 56
X. Quality of being voracious.	138 65 80 74 3 40 26 116
Y. Birthplace of Cardinal Wolsey.	71 188 43 175 150 18 21
Z. Founder of first normal school in the U.S., 1839 (1796-1859).	166 38 124 132

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-odd words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square of the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Read up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (second edition).

■	■	■	■	■	■	■	1 I	2 K	■	3 X	4 M	5 A	6 G	7 J	8 H	■	9 U	10 B
11 N	12 P	13 F	14 C	15 J	16 K	17 D	18 Y	19 I	■	20 T	21 Y	22 L	■	23 Q	24 J	25 R
26 X	27 B	28 K	29 V	30 U	31 D	32 E	■	33 R	34 P	35 C	36 T	37 B	38 Z	39 Q	40 X	41 N
42 I	43 Y	■	44 J	45 M	46 A	47 G	48 C	■	49 M	50 E	51 N	52 Q	53 L	54 K	55 C	56 W
■	57 R	58 F	59 J	60 U	■	61 B	62 R	63 O	64 H	65 X	66 U	67 N	■	68 G	69 B	70 M
71 Y	72 C	73 I	■	74 X	75 L	76 I	■	77 W	78 P	79 N	80 X	81 R	82 D	■	83 T	84 L
85 D	■	86 E	87 M	88 G	89 W	90 O	91 D	92 P	93 U	■	94 R	95 I	■	96 K	97 F	98 G
■	99 A	100 F	101 L	■	102 R	103 W	104 H	105 K	106 G	107 J	108 N	109 A	■	110 L	111 T	■
112 O	113 H	114 L	115 V	116 X	■	117 T	118 H	■	119 P	120 G	121 I	■	122 Q	123 E	124 Z	125 M
126 J	127 K	128 P	129 S	■	130 M	131 W	132 Z	133 K	134 G	135 R	136 T	137 S	138 X	139 U	140 C	141 J
■	142 D	143 N	144 A	145 C	146 Q	147 R	■	148 H	149 R	150 Y	151 P	152 V	153 T	154 O	155 K	156 N
■	157 U	158 M	159 S	160 D	161 A	162 H	163 P	■	164 F	165 K	■	166 Z	167 W	168 Q	169 R	170 L
■	171 H	172 V	■	173 K	174 T	175 Y	■	176 B	177 P	178 F	179 O	180 I	181 J	182 K	183 T	184 A
185 S	■	186 M	187 B	188 Y	189 R	190 C	191 U	192 E	193 L	194 N	195 O	■	■	■	■	■

Solution of last week's Double-Crostic will be found on page 16 of this issue.

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SRL / RECORDINGS SECTION

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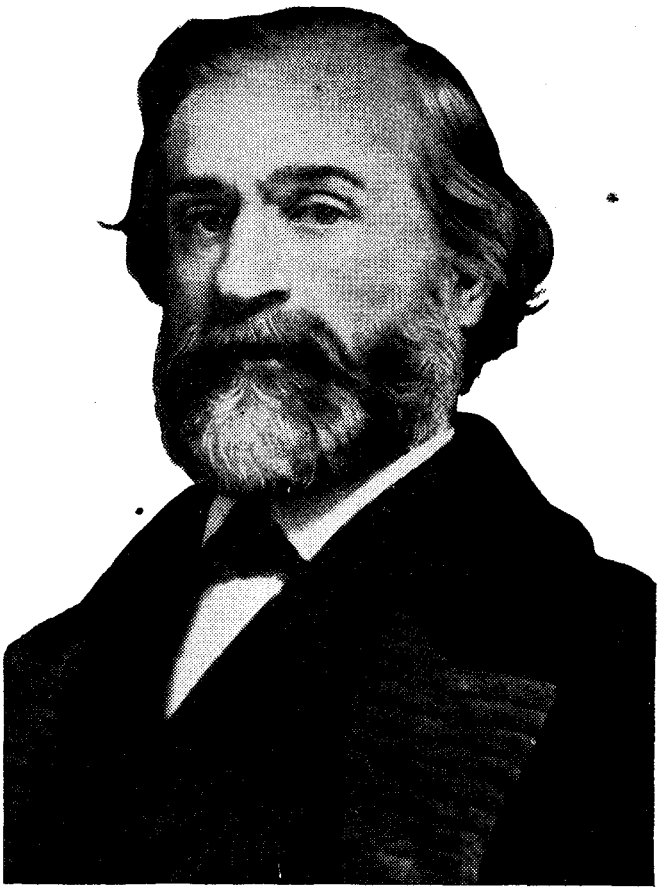

—Painting by Eugen Felix (1872), from Bettmann Archive.

Giuseppe Verdi—"a force of nature."

Verdi—Fifty Years After

HERBERT WEINSTOCK

JANUARY 27, 1951, is the fiftieth anniversary of Giuseppe Verdi's death. A half-century defines a diminutive segment of the long, slow curve of music's history and marks only one seventh of the variegated career of opera itself. Yet when Verdi was born at Le Roncole in Parma in 1813, Beethoven was but forty-two, Weber twenty-six, and Schubert sixteen. The Italian lived more than eighty-seven years. When, a greatly honored old man, he died at Milan in 1901, Stravinsky was already eighteen, Schönberg twenty-six, Debussy thirty-eight, and Puccini forty-two. Wagner, only four and one-half months Verdi's senior, had been dead nearly eighteen years when his great operatic contemporary died in the dawn of the twentieth century.

Verdi had devoted most of his genius and effective energy to opera, a very different art when he died from what it had been in his youth. Much of that difference, it is now clear, lay in his own operas and the operas and polemics of Richard Wagner. What was long defined as the Wagnerian "revolution" has lately come to seem to many a temporary counter-revolution effected by one symphonic musician of urgent genius. It has come, in fact, to be recognized more and more widely as a non-musical, philosophical-literary, reactionary, and all but successful attempt to put back together within the confines of mammoth syntheses numerous disparate musical, dramatic, poetic, and philosophic elements that time itself had separated carefully and wisely. And while the reputation of Wagner the creator of stage works—as distinct from that of Wagner the creator of music—has been subjected to a prolonged examination always at the verge of battle, Verdi's reputation as an opera-maker has enjoyed expansion and development of a treelike silence and solidity. The "music of the future," insofar as it is stage music, has begun to seem the music of the synthetic Imperial German past; the finest of Verdi's operas, meanwhile, have come to look more and more like the stage music of a later day. They look, fifty years after Verdi's death, as modern as Mozart and as though a large area of the future might be theirs.

When Verdi's first opera, "Oberto, Conte di Bonifacio," was produced at Milan in 1839, the Italian lyric stage was dominated by the works of three men and their lesser contemporaries and imitators. Bellini had died in 1835, but a quartet of his richly melodic singers' operas was still in active performance: "I Capuletti ed i Montecchi," "La Sonnambula," "Norma," and "I Puritani." Rossini, though only forty-seven, was already a full decade past his final opera, though in 1839 "Il Barbiere di Siviglia" and such of his numerous tragedies as "Otello," "Semiramide," and "Guillaume Tell" were being sung constantly to audiences who regarded them as masterworks. Prolifically active was Donizetti, whose first stable success, "Anna Bolena," dated from 1830, and who was already well represented by "L'Elisir d'Amore," "Lucrezia Borgia," and "Lucia di Lammermoor," though some of his best creations—including "La Fille du Régiment" and

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"Don Pasquale"—still lay in the future.

What were the positive characteristics of an operatic stage dominated by Bellini, Rossini, and Donizetti? What the negative? Melody reigned —lush, singable, whistleable, seductive, persuasive melody. As a nightly matter of course singers performed miracles of agility, sang "Qui la voce" in "I Puritani," the Drinking Song from "Lucrezia Borgia," or "O muto asil del pianto" from what had to cross the Alps to become "Guglielmo Tell" as smoothly and unthinkingly as though each were a folk song absorbed in childhood. And in one sense each was in truth a folk song, so truly had it become popular.

NEGATIVELY, and despite contemporary complaints to the contrary, the opera orchestra was increasingly being relegated to the minor role of exquisite accompaniment. Over-all energy was being drained from the operatic trunk, the tree being weakened for the excessive production of the glossy leaves of cavatina and cabaletta, the momentarily dazzling blooms of bel canto roulade, skip, and trill by soprano, tenor, contralto, baritone, and bass. Monteverdi, Gluck, and Mozart had lived in vain, it seemed, so little was Donizetti, for example, intent upon producing stage works in which the drama of character, comic or tragic or both together, would be created indissolubly from singing, instrumental playing, and a pervading sense of dynamic theater.

Into this euphonious, but hothouse-nurtured, operatic world of melody, always melody, and sensuous singing, Verdi's first opera dropped like a small portent of storm. It was neither very original nor very good, but it was intermittently dramatic and very energetic. Beside the mellifluous flow of Bellini, Rossini, and Donizetti, it sounded to many like the raw, hot assertion of a peasant and a bumpkin. And when "Oberto" was followed (after an 1840 mistake called "Un Giorno di Regno") by "Nabucodonosor" (1842) and "I Lombardi alla Prima Crociata" (1843), the most prescient Italian and transalpine critics began to suspect that what had irrupted onto the operatic stage of Italy was a force of nature. Some of them heard that force as a ringing voice expressing, perhaps unintentionally, the passionate hopes of the peoples of the Italian peninsula for independent national existence. A measure of the difference in vital energy between the young Verdi and his nearest Italian operatic contemporaries may be taken by trying to imagine any of their operas becoming symbolic of the cause of unity and independence.

In "Ernani" (1844) the personality of Verdi asserted itself with a vigor that would make this opera worth restaging today in spite of its patches of banality. Opera, which had been stretched out on a perfumed couch to display the beauty of its seductive but underdeveloped limbs, had begun striding about and developing a surprising musculature. Only seven years and ten operas later Verdi would achieve his first wholly satisfactory musical drama, "Rigoletto" (1851), like "Ernani" based at some removes on a revolutionary play by Victor Hugo. Routine and insensitive performances of "Rigoletto" have dimmed its luster to our sight. But a first-rate mounting that treated it with the care customarily bestowed now on, say, "Don Giovanni" would reveal this centenarian score as peopled by living men and women whose characters, circumstances, and emotions are sensitively created by their music.

With "Il Trovatore" (1853) Verdi's gift for musculature appeared momentarily to be getting out of control. The melodies were undisciplined almost to barbarism, the orchestra was noisy, the assertiveness white hot. It is possible simultaneously to love "Il Trovatore" for its excitements and to be thankful that Verdi explored no farther along that way. Less than two months after the Rome première of "Il Trovatore," in fact, Venice heard "La Traviata," in which the energy is subtly modulated, the characters are drawn in the round, and the orchestra is superbly meshed into the whole. The man who could compose those two operas in little more than four months might do anything at all. He might even (as he did) compose nine more operas including "I Vespri Siciliani" (1855), "Simon Boccanegra" (1857), "Un Ballo in Maschera" (1859), "La Forza del Destino" (1862), "Don Carlo" (1867), "Aïda" (1871), "Otello" (1887), and "Falstaff" (1893), stopping long enough on the way to write the ringing "Manzoni" Requiem.

—*Brown Brothers.*

Verdi, 1899 — "the elements of opera were once more at or near ideal balance."

What had happened to Italian opera in the forty-four years between "Oberto" and "Falstaff"? It had been enormously energized, so much was clear. Rather than a carnival of singers running riot among melodies, it had become musical drama again, that amalgam of melody, harmony, rhythm, singing, and orchestration with character, situation, and action —but an amalgam still preponderantly musical, one in which the characters still sing their natures. It was literary and philosophical only by indirection, static only when least successful, usually all swiftness and motion. It still streamed with melody as only Italian music can stream, but that wonderful flow was no longer allowed to flood everything in the vicinity. The elements of opera were once more at or near ideal balance. Monteverdi, Gluck, and Mozart had triumphed after all. And most of this improvement was the singlehanded work of Giuseppe Verdi.

In at least "Rigoletto," "La Traviata," "Aïda," "Otello," and "Falstaff" Verdi with complete success had placed all of opera's diverse forces at the unified service of stageworthiness. In a dozen others he had succeeded and failed in changing proportions, the failures being caused mostly by his uncertain judgment of librettos. Not theory-ridden or distended with amateur religious, political, or racial philosophizing like the music dramas proposed by Wagner (sometimes as distinguished from those Wagner wrote and composed), Verdi's finest creations are lyric dramas judiciously balanced, vivacious, as well constructed as the best musical stage works of the classic past. If we do not rank them with "Le Nozze di Figaro" and "Don Giovanni," that is because we recognize a hierarchical distinction between one realized genius and another. It is a difference that the hard-headed grocer's son from Le

(*Continued on page* 58)

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After Verdi, Puccini

VERDI was forty-five, and surging into strong middleage, when Giacomo Puccini was born at Lucca, on December 23, 1858. As the path of the evening star of Italian operatic art soared ever upward, it exerted an unmistakable if not always welcome pull on a youth who was to know some of the heartbreak, much of the honor, if little of the glorious fulfilment of that career. In extracts from the forthcoming "Puccini," by George Marek (to be published by Simon and Schuster next month), RECORDINGS presents a new view of the influence exerted by Verdi on Puccini, and the reaction thereto.

Angeloni [a teacher of Puccini's native Lucca] introduced Puccini to secular music. He spoke to him of Verdi, and played excerpts from "Rigoletto," "Traviata," and "Trovatore" for the boy. He told him of a new opera which Verdi had completed and which was soon to be given in Cairo. . . . To Giacomo the name of Verdi became the symbol of glory and success. His music, so warm, so sweet, so easily understood, seemed to be addressed directly to him. . . . When he was eighteen [1876], he read one day that the opera of which Angeloni had spoken was to be performed in Pisa. The boy became obsessed with the thought that he wanted to hear an opera, to hear *the* opera over which all Italy was agog. He went about the project cleverly. He wanted to hear "Aïda" at all costs, but he also knew that he had to hear "Aïda" at practically no cost. It was out of the question to scrape up enough money for carfare to and from Pisa. Very well, proposed Puccini to two of his friends, let us walk to Pisa. The distance was nineteen miles. . . . Puccini proposed that the three boys systematically train themselves. In order to make the training more attractive, Puccini hid a Toscano cigar at the base of a column of the Church of Santa Maria Forisportam. The three boys were to set off from a given point and walk—not run—to the church. The first to arrive was the winner of the cigar. They practised this for days.

Thus hardened they started out on the morning of the day of the performance. Along the dusty road they walked, resting in the shadow of an olive tree, and opening too early the box of provisions they had taken along. The walk consumed the better part of seven hours. They arrived, in what state of dustiness we may imagine, at the doors of the theatre, three hours before the performance.

By a subterfuge, and the help of an indulgent porter at the stage door, they managed to be admitted, and took refuge in the gallery.

Puccini told Adami that he had expected "Aïda" to open with triumphal chords and crashing sounds. He had not seen the score of the new opera, perhaps because the score was too expensive for his teacher's purse. When at the performance he heard the soft cadence of the violins, weightless and songlike, he felt himself "touched by the shadow of poetry . . . transplanted into an unreal atmosphere always higher, always farther away." His heart seemed to beat so that he thought he would burst with emotion. He breathed as if a fever were shaking him, and waves of ambition, intimations of glory and splendor swept over him. He thought Verdi a god, all-potent and all-protective. He felt that Verdi had "taken pity on him," that he pointed to him with one hand, while with his other hand he swung open a door. . . . The curtain fell. They walked home through the night. It was dawn when Puccini reached the dark house where he lived. He knew from that time on that he wanted to compose operas, that he would no longer be content with organ playing, that he had to go to a better music school than Lucca could offer if he were to learn the intricacies of operatic craft.

After the premiere of "Le Villi" in May 1884, a full decade before "Manon Lescaut," Verdi wrote to his friend Opprandino Arrivabone:

I have heard the composer, Puccini, well spoken of. I have seen a letter too reporting all kinds of good things about him. He follows the new tendencies, which is only natural, but he keeps strictly to melody, and that is neither new nor old. But it seems that he is predominantly a symphonist; no harm in that. Only here one must be careful. Opera is opera, symphony symphony; and I don't think it is a good idea to insert a symphonic piece into an opera just for the pleasure of letting the orchestra cut loose once in a while.

In 1894 "Manon Lescaut" had sortied from Turin across the Continent to England. When it had reached the stage of Covent Garden, Bernard Shaw wrote in *The World*:

"And when you come to Puccini, the composer of the latest 'Manon Lescaut,' then indeed the ground is so transformed that you could almost think yourself in a new country.

"Puccini, at least, shows no signs of atrophy of the melodic faculty: he breaks out into catching melodies quite in the vein of Verdi: for example, 'Tra voi, belle,' in the first act of 'Manon,' has all the charm of the tunes beloved by the old operatic guard.

"On that and other accounts, Puccini looks to me more like the heir of Verdi than any of his rivals."

The heir of Verdi [continues Marek]: This was the appellation by which he was soon known. He did not entirely enjoy the title. He signed one of his letters to a friend somewhat ruefully as "The Successor (Naughty)."

When success pressed upon him, Puccini reverted to the venerated octogenarian as an instance of what a composer might or might not be expected to do. "Bohème" had captured Italy and then spread to Paris, where he had gone in 1898 to supervise the staging. From Paris Puccini wrote to his adviser, Ricordi, protesting against "a life of drawing rooms and parties":

I don't want to make comparisons, because it would be ridiculous, but Verdi has always pleased himself in these matters, and, in spite of that, he has had not such a bad little career!

To this Ricordi responded in the fulness of knowledge not encumbered by abstract veneration:

You cite Verdi, but your citation is not exact. From his youth Verdi was assiduous in frequenting the high society of Milan, and when he went to Paris, Petersburg, London, Madrid, and Vienna for his operas, he submitted to the necessary con-

sequences! Certainly without pleasure! . . . But even he had to bow his head to the uses and abuses of society. He found the remedy in a tranquil life which compensated him for the pills he had to gulp. One might also mention that today times have changed, victory is more difficult to attain and needs greater tact and strategy! Therefore arm yourself with philosophy and beware of comparisons of yourself with certain artistic pigs! ! — who remain pigs no matter what they do.

Verdi, and Verdi's example, occur frequently in Puccini's correspondence with his publisher. In a musical context, Ricordi took exception to Puccini's requirements in the fourth act of "Bohème":

In your score there are all kinds of possible and impossible indications. It is a forest of *p-pp-pppp*, or *f-ff-fff-ffff*, of slowing up and going ahead, so that the conductors will lose their heads.

Puccini's riposte was:

. . . As for the *pp*'s and *ff*'s of the score, if I have overdone them it

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is because, *as Verdi says*, when one wants *piano* one puts *ppp*.

Perhaps the most famous incident of artistic interaction between Puccini and Verdi relates to the subject of "Tosca." According to legend, Verdi expressed the opinion: "There is a drama of Sardou's, which, had I still time, I would gladly set to music: that is 'Tosca.' Provided, however, that Sardou would permit me to change the last act." In an exhortation to Puccini, Ricordi wrote about the same time (October 1896):

> With Illica I paid a short visit of three hours to Verdi. He had informed himself of what new works were in process, and he told me: "Puccini has a good libretto! Fortunate composer who has that work in his hands!" Our Verdi is a good prophet!! Therefore *laboremus*!!

As "Tosca" matured Puccini had doubts that it was really a subject for him. According to Lucio D'Ambra, in his "Lives of Italian Musicians," a conversation between Puccini and Sardou went as follows:

> PUCCINI: Perhaps it would be better if a Frenchman were to set your play to music.
> SARDOU: No, better an Italian. "Tosca" is a Roman work. It needs your Italian song.
> PUCCINI: Verdi, our great Verdi, once thought of "Tosca" and gave it up, a sign that the subject intimidated him. Do you wonder, M. Sardou, that *I* am afraid?
> SARDOU: Verdi wasn't intimidated, but Verdi is old, Verdi is tired. You ought to be encouraged by the fact that a great composer for the theatre such as he had confidence in "Tosca" and recognized in it the opera, the good opera, which it is.

On January 27, 1901, Giuseppe Verdi died in Milan.

> He died as he had lived [writes Marek] a proud and self-sufficient man. As he was dressing one morning, a collar button slipped from his hands and rolled under the bed. The eighty-seven-year-old Verdi, instead of calling for aid, himself crawled under the bed to look for it. This was on the twenty-first of January. He had a stroke and never again recovered consciousness. He was buried with simplicity, according to instructions contained in his will. Boito wrote: "We all basked in the sun of his Olympian old age." On February 1 at the Scala, Toscanini conducted a great commemorative concert of Verdi's music. Caruso and Tamagno were among the soloists. Puccini attended this concert.
>
> Though Verdi had long been silent as a musician, his corporeal death was for Puccini, as it was for all Italian musicians, the dropping of a curtain, the end of a sublime performance. He was now alone: neither Mascagni nor Leoncavallo had fulfilled earlier promises. He alone was the man who, whether he liked it or not, had the right to the title of "The Successor."

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Fifty Years of Record Prices

EDITOR'S NOTE: *This concludes C. G. Burke's article begun in* RECORDINGS *for January. In the first part Mr. Burke discussed various standards of record pricing applied in the acoustical and pre-LP electrical eras.*

IN THE great majority of cases LP has ordained vivid price reductions for recorded compositions. In a few cases it has not. Prices may be expected to fluctuate with general economic and specific discal conditions, and no one has a right to quarrel with that; but everyone has a right to expect a reasoned and consistent price-structure based on the assumption that expenditure of ten dollars should procure twice the value of five. Until a more valuable criterion than comparative duration has been found for assessing the monetary value of records it will naturally be expected by everyone that duration will be real, measured in minutes, and not apparent, measured in diametric inches.

This means that an old tradition must be expunged, for there are signs that it has not been, that the jolly insouciance of Micky's Bar and Grille lingers in precincts invaded by Händelian rectitude. The contradictory features of Columbia's early editions (haphazard use of ten or twelve, one side or two, for works of equivalent duration) may be excused because of the haste and uncertainty involved in instigating a great new project. LP, now well into its third year, established as the normal recording condition, cannot justify a continuance of its infant idiosyncrasies. It means long playing; but how long it can play and how long it should play without tonal detriment we have not been told. We do know that the unsupplied figures are the subject of some professional disagreement. We know also that we have had a ten-inch Allegro side (HANDEL: Harpsichord Suite No. 11) lasting something less than seven minutes and a number of ten-inch Columbia sides surpassing seventeen minutes. Some of the smaller companies, whose appearance has been one of the interesting phenomena of LP, seem to agree that fifteen minutes is about right for twelve inches and average that duration pretty consistently; while Columbia (side 1, "Eroica" Symphony) has surpassed thirty-one minutes, and Victor (same side, same symphony) has given us almost half an hour. London, in LP matters no model of consistency, has surpassed twenty-seven minutes for a twelve-inch side and held itself in another case to a modest twelve. The Mercury "Flying Dutchman" has the following durations (to the nearest minute) for its eight incongruous sides; 1, ten minutes; 2, twenty-two minutes; 3, twenty-two minutes; 4, twenty-one minutes; 5, twelve minutes; 6, twenty-five minutes; 7, sixteen minutes; 8, fourteen minutes.

The present tendency seems to be toward large measure, with recent examples from Capitol, Cetra, Columbia, and RCA Victor suggesting that those companies are avoiding inadequate duration as a matter of policy. It is notable that Columbia and RCA Victor employ a good percentage of ten-inch LP's. London, as indicated, exhibits a remarkable variation in her allotment of time, and her treatment of two Haydn Symphonies, Nos. 99 and 103, on ten-inch records with the turnover in mid-slow movement, provides cause for apprehension among discophiles who understand the fundamental benefit of LP and cannot comprehend why one of the leading manufacturers does not. It is probable that the London evocation of this grimy ghost who cuts music to the disc instead of disc to the music was a temporary aberration not to be repeated. (EDITOR'S NOTE: Unfortunately, it recurs in the recent Kleiber "Eroica.") It would not be reasonable for the creators of ffrr to consider the substitution of a Cheapside pub for Micky's Bar and Grille a great advance in culture.

Mozart's "Jupiter" Symphony is on LP in these editions: Walter's on an early Columbia, double-faced twelve inch; Krips's on London, double-faced ten inch; Toscanini's on RCA Victor, one side of a twelve inch, backed by a Mozart bassoon concerto; Beecham's on a recent Columbia, one side of a twelve inch, backed by the "Prague" Symphony. The progression is towards greater length, greater value.

IT IS contended, however, that duration greater than twenty minutes produces a diminishing efficiency, a loss of brightness and warmth, in the recorded sound which, if true, would make the longer duration an illusory comfort. Some listeners profess awareness of deterioration in the longer LP's, and this is echoed in some quarters of the industry. Music lovers will not pursue a bargain at the expense of quality, and they are entitled to an understanding with the industry that records of a quality below the best obtainable will not be issued to satisfy the wishes of an indulgent-eared minority avid primarily for superextension of duration. We shall be grateful for the "Saint Matthew" Passion on a single disc, but not if spatial compression involves cyclic compression as corollary.

A nostalgic flirtation of both Columbia and RCA Victor with another ghost of a tinseled era—the re-creation of a hierarchy of values within the division of "classical" music—noted without glad cries by collectors and merchants both, has come but not wholly gone after experimental periods. As of this writing (minds change rapidly in such matters as these) Columbia has raised ten-inch LP's uniformly to $4, retained some twelve-inch LP's at $4.85, and boosted most of that size to $5.45. In arriving at the latter category, Columbia has, indeed, respected a thinking based on duration—the works are the equivalent of at least eight twelve-inch 78 rpm sides. So far, so good. BUT it has also decreed that a twelve-inch LP, whether it matches this length or not, rates the higher price if it contains *two* complete works. Since there has been much complaint about "pairings," in which one work sold the disc and the other was excess baggage, it seems absurd to penalize the buyer additionally, when he doesn't want side No. 2 in any case.

The RCA Victor plan (now abandoned, we gratefully note), featured distinctions expressed by a little letter x, adjacent to the album number. Without the x, the disc was worth sixty cents more; but what the x connoted, except to the sharp-eyed executive who decreed it, was in algebraic fact, an unknown quantity. It was the manufacturer's contention that some Chopin by Brailowsky and Beethoven's Fifth by Koussevitzky were of greater value than Monteux's Beethoven No. 8 or the recent "Rigoletto," both of which belong to the highest class of recorded matter.

The revival of this ancient lack of system was unquestionably a sentimental salute to the rococo age of complicated senselessness; and the carefree attitude was emphasized prettily by the absence of the stigmatic x from Victor 45's. The sudden cancellation of the distinction in a general hoist of Victor LP prices to a uniform point illustrates a frolicsome mathematical temper which the public could not help envying if they were not too bewildered.

Tangential to this is the appearance of RCA Victor's Treasury series, in which some prime catalogue items have been grouped on LP discs. Though welcome at prices consistent with current merchandise one cannot

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Those Songwriter Blues

PATRICIA PEALE

THERE are approximately two hundred music publishing firms in New York City. They are located in an area of about four square blocks, the center of which is Forty-ninth Street and Broadway, and they vary in financial strength, pull, and prestige. The Upper Strata firms are run by several executives who are often related to one another by blood or marriage. The executives are assisted by a staff of hectic supersalesmen called song-pluggers and a pair of receptionists whose job it is to greet the Unknown Songwriter with all the warmth extended by an iced anchovy. Parallel in prestige with the large family firms are those which are branch offices of Hollywood outfits, devotedly pushing songs from Betty Grable movies. Held in almost equally high esteem is a group of small publishers who have been lucky enough to have had three or four hits in a row. They are looked upon with wonder and admiration and referred to as Hot. At the bottom of the list is the small publisher who is his own song-plugger. He is frequently ill and borrows dimes from his secretary.

The offices of the Upper Strata firms are easy to spot. They are marked by a cluster of hungry-looking persons who hang around the entrance like black flies in August. They dress in gray-green suits, open-necked shirts of defiantly bright shades, and they don't wear hats. They talk furiously, assuring each other with feverish confidence that a Big Thing is about to happen to them just as soon as Vic gets back from the coast.

All publishers are bound together by a mutual ambition: an insatiable, gnawing, relentless, passionate desire to Have a Hit. When a publisher accepts a song it is not because he likes the music and lyrics as such. It is because he hopes some day to make money out of it; to clean up; to get rich enough to buy a golf course, an oil well, a movie company; to take over for God. The music publisher is a business man. He knows that a rival company has a smash hit called "I've Only Got One Eye, and That's on You," and he is on the alert for anything that is an undisguised copy of it.

The publisher abhors unknown songwriters. They represent a probable financial loss and a possibility of making a fool of himself, so why take a chance? About three-quarters of one per cent of publishers are willing to listen, with a tolerant expression, a word of encouragement, and sometimes an invitation to "try working on this idea." These are the publishers who keep the Unknown Songwriter from writing himself off into the great beyond. They are the angels, the saints, the adored ones, the darlings who make the Unknown feel that Heaven is slightly on his side. Unhappily, their kindness and generosity are traits which go hand in hand with an inability to Get Records.

The song-plugger, or contact man, is a vital part of the publishing firm. He must be able to consume vast quantities of alcohol, play golf well enough to complain about his score, and call everyone in the Upper Strata by nicknames unknown even to their beloveds. When he is trying to Get a Record a contact man on the telephone sounds something like this: "Jerry? Hiya, sweetheart. How's the golf? Jeez, you shoulda seen what I did yesterday just because I ate breakfast; I mean it was terrific. . . . Yeah, yeah. . . . Listen, sweetie, will you do something for me? Will you, sweetheart? I'm on my knees. . . . Yeah, I've got something and it's the greatest. I mean SENSATIONAL. . . . See you at Mabel's at 5:30. YOU'll DIE." A meeting at Mabel's follows. Girls show up, love and liquor take over, and the whole divine evening is climaxed by Jerry's implied promise to do the record as soon as possible. Often, of course, the artist scheduled to make the record is laid up with other commitments, such as intestinal flu, acute divorce, or mental lapses. In that case the contact man may again be heard shouting, "Lou? Hiya, sweetie. How's the golf?"

The Recording Artist is the one to whom the songwriter, song-plugger, and publisher crawl. If *he* likes the song, you're in. But the Artist is usually besieged with personal problems and friends who want things, and he wears expensive, custom-made shoes. To dare to approach this Deity without the sanction of his brother-in-law would be like Patrick Henry calling upon Stalin. The guy's rehearsing, he's got a recording date, he's got to catch a plane, he's got pneumonia, he's got to go to a ball game; out of the way.

The songwriter is the one who writes the songs. He begins by being sure he can, and then listens to the works of Irving Berlin and Larry Hart, to obscure gems, disc shows, Eddy Howard, and Vaughn Monroe. His first songs are often expressions of his own emotions, and the publisher says they aren't commercial. The next songs he turns out are composites of all the recent commercial goldmines. The publisher says, "We're looking for something new. We want a Gimmick." The next songs are years ahead of themselves. One of them even uses a strange word, like "Tinsel." The publisher says, "Nobody's going to know what 'tinsel' means. Write something everyone can understand. 'Home on the Range,' with love in it." The next songs are precisely that. The publisher says, "Love is out right now. Doesn't sell."

To study the course of the Unknown Songwriter would be like following an inebriated kangaroo through a tree nursery. The inexperienced songwriter enters the publisher's office, and is immediately rejected by the receptionist, and after that by ten or fifteen other receptionists at other publishers. He should learn, but he doesn't. Finally a kind girl who has been reading her Bible sends him in to see Somebody. If Somebody is the gentle type he says, "Don't show me your song. Songwriters are a dime a dozen. Why, do you know I turned down Frank Loesser last week, business is so bad!" Or, "Listen, I like you. Give you a little tip. They need a dishwasher downstairs. Mention my name."

The Unknown Songwriter relives this routine again and again until one day a publisher says, "Maybe I can do something with this." After several weeks he telephones the publisher to hear that nothing has happened—yet. He calls back a week later and the publisher says, "Glad you called. We have a CONTRACT for you to sign. We have promises from Freddy Howell, Tommy Raye, and a lot of small labels." As the months pass, Freddy Howell is felled by an ulcerated tooth, Tommy Raye goes into orange ranching, and the small

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MUSIC

(*Continued from page 21*)

but the end product for me is the source material for another, and livelier, book. That book would see the subject in terms of how commercial Broadway is, but would also honor a man with a good idea—a Porter, Schwartz, Gershwin, Rome, Rodgers, or Berlin—who has engaged its commercial challenge and yet produced a work that synthesized a period or summed up an attitude. The photographs of Cecil Smith's book are generous in number and well chosen, doing in a way what the author has not done in re-creation of the moods and manners of the material he is discussing. There is an ample index.

Music Book Notes

BEHIND THE GOLDEN CURTAIN: The Story of the Metropolitan Opera: 1883 to 1950. By Mary Ellis Peltz. Farrar, Straus & Young. $2.50. This is by way of being an attractive illustrated souvenir and a salute to the new management served by the Metropolitan Opera Guild. Mrs. Peltz gives a sketch of the history of the house itself as well as a survey of the sixty-seven seasons which have gone forward within its walls. It is well to do this now, for few are the operagoers today whose memories go back to the original auditorium destroyed by fire in 1892; even scarcer are pictures giving an idea of its appearance. And it is well to pause and consider the history of this theatre, which, for all its undeniable inequalities and inadequacies, many people have come to love. Otto Kahn, to whose unceasing interest and magnificent generosity were owing many of the great achievements of the Gatti-Casazza regime, was one who always wanted a new house; indeed, he even bought properties with this aim, though he never was able to win the board of directors to his point of view. There have been many plans and proposals: only recently Irving Kolodin [*SRL* Nov. 25] brought up for discussion once again the age-old question as to whether it would be better to move out or to remodel. Still, as this book testifies, affection abides for the "old barn" with its treasury of memories.

The main body of the book reviews briefly and admiringly the history of the company's performances and the procession of voices and personalities down the years. Here are the highlights for those who do not want all the detail in the histories of Kolodin and Krehbiel. There are numerous and often handsome pictures, an account of the aims and achievements of the Guild, and finally a glance at the future. —PHILIP L. MILLER.

MONTEVERDI: Creator of Modern Music. By Leo Schrade. Norton. $6. Since Padre Martini scholars have intermittently paid tribute to Monteverdi as the creator of a style of composition that revolutionized the musical art of his time and guided its subsequent development. With the Eighties research in details of his life and problems of his works became almost continual. Today the list of "specialists" comprises savants from all countries. In attempting a new study Leo Schrade, leading musicologist at Yale, set himself a formidable task. In minor points he takes issue with Prunières, Redlich, and others, but the real originality of the treatment lies in the interpretation of Monteverdi's music as an integral whole, in which the phenomena of genius, esthetics, culture, philosophy, and history united to bring about a supreme achievement. Though the book adds nothing to our knowledge of the composer's life, it enriches our understanding of his art.

In the critical examination of this art special emphasis is laid on Monteverdi's consistent growth as dramatist. In every form in which he wrote he is shown to have challenged the rigid Northern polyphony that dominated sixteenth-century musical thought. Whether canzonetta, madrigal, ballet, church music, or the dramatic monody of the Florentine Camerata, each of his works becomes a portrayal of elemental passions, a distillation of the eternal tragedy of man. This effort to give expressive power to disciplined structures resulted in a new—and still prevailing—concept of composition that is here more exhaustively discussed than in any previous study. The recent resurgence of Monteverdi in Western musical life should gain impetus from this book.

Occasional trite phrasings and careless proofreading point to editorial nodding, but the author himself errs strangely in a detail of iconography. Two of his illustrations (most of which could be better reproduced) are mislabeled: the familiar etching of Monteverdi on the title page of the 1644 memorial, "Fiori poetici," is presented, extravagantly enlarged, as the possession of the Ferdinandeum at Innsbruck, while the portrait of *seicento* Venetian craftsmanship that does belong to the Ferdinandeum is marked "From 'Fiori poetici'." Minor lapses of this kind are all the more disturbing in so erudite a volume. May the success of the work afford the author an opportunity of correcting these flaws in a second edition. Such success would be fully merited.

—KATHLEEN O'DONNELL HOOVER.

—From "Musical Comedy in America."

Lillian Russell—"evoked a mood."

THE SONGS OF HENRI DUPARC, by Sydney Northcote. Roy Publishers. $3.50. According to the histories Henri Duparc is definitely a minor composer, wherefore not much has been written about him. Dying in 1933 at the age of eighty-five, he left only seventeen works, fourteen of them songs (though mostly big songs, two conceived with orchestra and six so arranged by the composer). Of these songs only two were published before 1910, though Duparc ceased writing in 1884. Still his place among the immortals is assured. An extremely self-critical composer, no one knows how much he discarded; he even attempted to destroy all copies of some early published piano pieces. On the strength of the remaining admirably mature songs—including such masterpieces as "Invitation au voyage," "Phidylé," "La vie antérieure," and "Chanson triste"—Mr. Northcote places him beside Fauré as one of the two greatest masters of the French *mélodie*.

In this slender volume each of the songs is analyzed and literally translated for the benefit of the interpreter, and there are valuable chapters giving historic background and some estimate of Duparc's forerunners, contemporaries, and poets. The important biographical section is of necessity brief, and the big event of Duparc's life—the nervous disorder which rendered him incapable of work—is only touched upon; but there are generous quotes from his letters and from writings of his friends to throw light upon his personality. The bibliography lists the sources quoted, and a discography shows that all but two of the songs are available on records. —P. L. M.

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Second Instalment

BACH: *"The Well-Tempered Clavier"—Book I, Preludes and Fugues Nos. 9-16. Wanda Landowska, harpsichord.* (RCA Victor LP 1107, $5.67.)

"IT IS of no avail," Ernest Renan warns, "to pounce on truth with the clumsy violence of a wild boar." To apply this dictum to an interpretive artist of genius is to make one wary of all easy generalizations. The truth about Wanda Landowska has fallen prey to clumsy and oversimplified appreciations. Thus, it is said that, steeped in musical and literary research, she eschews the promptings of instinct in favor of intellect; that she stands in the vanguard of a purist revolt against the romanticizing of Bach; that she propels whatever lies under her hands with a relentless, metronomic beat. All these statements carry the germ of truth; but push them too far and they collapse. She is intellectual, of course; yet at times a divine intuitive sense commands her playing. A purist she is in the sense of striving always to play Bach "according to Bach"; but this endeavor often leads away from a literal rendition of text to something claiming strong kinship with romanticism. Rhythmic drive she possesses; but it is compounded at times of demonstrably unmetronomic liberties. How fortunate that these contradictions exist! Without them Landowska would be a musician of consequence; with them she is a musician of genius.

Volume II of her historic recording project shows the workings of this genius in full panoply. It opens with the Prelude in E major, a relaxed pastorale, serenely played yet imbued with a tensile strength characteristic of this artist. The Fugue that follows begins with a short leap from E to F sharp. And what a leap! Here, in this tense span, is more vitality than some musicians manage to convey in an entire recital.

Compare the succeeding E minor Prelude as it emerges in Landowska's interpretation with the printed score and it will be seen how unliteral she can on occasion be. For the left hand the score would seem to indicate a steady stream of sixteenth notes. In the Landowska version, however, every other note is accented, and there results a stately tread in the bass, acting as perfect foil to the florid treble. Such re-creation in the truest sense of the word is evident again in the interpretation of the F major Fugue, which sets one to dreaming of gay peasant dances, with red skirts swirling and wooden clogs stamping. Its dynamic is referable, not to textual research in matters of eighteenth-century musical style, but to a temperament nurtured on the dances of Poland's peasantry.

Strongly contrasted is the F minor Fugue—the musical equivalent of a Gothic cathedral, dark and cavernous as the Duomo in Milan. This and the two other fugues in minor key are the high points in Volume II. Space does not allow detailed examination of their interpretation. It is enough to remark on the cogency of registration and phrasing, which reveal the counterpoint in full perspective, and on the tasteful liberties in tempo, which breathe life into music that can sink so easily into cold rigidity.

There remains to report that Volume II has been made in Landowska's own home in Lakeville, Connecticut. I note an appreciable difference in quality of sound, most of it for the better.

—ROLAND GELATT.

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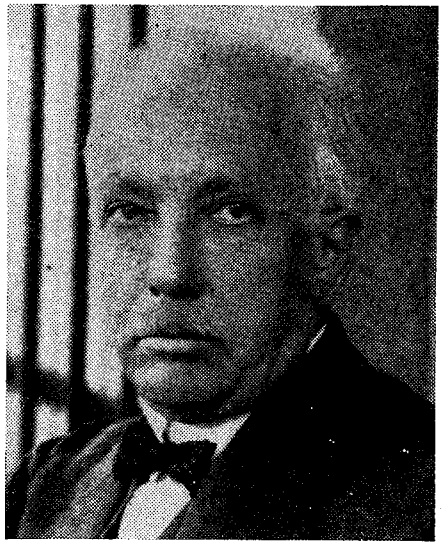
Recordings in Review

A Complete "Salome"

STRAUSS: *"Salome." Josef Keilberth conducting the Saxon State Orchestra, with Christel Goltz, soprano, Bernd Aldenhoff, tenor, and Josef Herrmann, baritone.* (Oceanic set 302, $12.55.)

OF THE several operas from generically similar sources during the last year this is one, finally, that measures up to all reasonable expectations. It is well-engineered and properly processed to discs (two twelve-inch LP's); more consequentially, Keilberth has a first-rate idea of what is in this score, and Christel Goltz is a singer who comes closer to the Welitch standard than any Salome in recent years. There is something of the same drive and excitement in the vocal sound, a like tendency to edginess; but also a lust-driven intensity that makes a consistently absorbing experience of her Salome. The last page or so could hardly be better done.

With a Salome to begin with, Keilberth proceeds to give us a "Salome" of excellent design, dramatic impact, and cumulative power. The beginning inclines to rather slow tempi (the lack of stage action may intensify that), but from the entrance of Herod the progress is swift and sure to the bitter end. A particular care has been expended on the text; the voices have been microphoned so well that much more of the word content is heard than in the theatre. This is especially true of the splendid Herod of Bernd Aldenhoff and the Herodias of Inger Karen, which lends more meaning to Strauss's writing than is customary. Josef Herrmann is an acceptable Jokanaan, if not quite equal to his associates. All the small roles are capably performed, and a German-English text is provided.



Richard Strauss—"more meaning to [his] writing than is customary."

Altogether, this "Salome" is welcome no more for its own solid excellence than as a portent of the things to come which Oceanic has promised . . . a complete "Tristan," "Der Rosenkavalier," and "Merry Wives of Windsor" among them. We wait, in hope.

Bach in B Minor

BACH: *B minor Mass. Hermann Scherchen conducting the Vienna Symphony Orchestra, with Emmy Loose and Hilde Caske, sopranos, Gertrud Burgsthaler-Schuster, alto, Anton Dermota, tenor, and Alfred Poell, bass.* (Westminster LP's 50 37/39, $18.75.)

IN a long period of listening to this work (mostly within the limiting confines of Manhattan Island), I have not heard a performance of the imagination, integration, and subtlety of this one directed by Hermann Scherchen. Whether or not the assumption by those involved was that most persons listen to it as a musical phenomenon rather than a liturgical exercise, the warmth and eloquence of the texture and its felicity as sound are the dominant impulses of Scherchen's exposition.

Considered phonographically the results are about midway between the ceremonial grandeur of the old Coates effort, on HMV, with its overwhelming means, and the ascetic rigors of the Robert Shaw, on RCA, with its rather paltry ones. The sound of the Akademie Kammerchor is not vast, neither is it puny; the important fact is that it is always sufficient, never wanting. Flexibility is its dominant trait, with considerable advantage to the musical sense of the writing, and the adjustment of vocal to instrumental means.

Doubtless there are exceptions, on traditional grounds, that can be taken to Scherchen's animated tempi in the faster movements, and in some not so fast (the "Laudamus Te," for example). But in the amplitude of the work as a whole this approach is more than justified by the vitality and contrast provided to the whole musical structure. Certainly it is a rare delight to hear choral singing of the softness and timbre he evokes in the "Et incarnatus" and the "Crucifixus." As in Columbia's "German Requiem" of Brahms, one has the feeling that each voice in the choir retains individual timbre and expressiveness while fusing with the whole. Around them, Scherchen weaves an instrumental timbre constantly conscious of the Bach who wrote the orchestral suites.

In this scheme, the work of the soloists is intrinsic rather than exhibitionist. Emmy Loose is the excellent first soprano, and Hilde Ceske is admirable as the second soprano for the "Laudamus Te." I can conceive a more eloquent alto than Burgsthaler-Schuster for the climatic "Agnus Dei," and Dermota is needlessly cautious in the "Benedictus." Poell suffices. In ensemble they work together splendidly.

Essentially, however, this version of the Mass is a glorification of Bach's musical inventiveness and the scope and variety of his ideas rather than an affirmation of liturgical devotion or solo skill. Since the whole sound is reproduced with breadth and fidelity, one can ask little more. Edward Tatnall Canby's notation is admirably informative and the text (Latin and English) is separately provided.

The Uncommon Beethoven

BEETHOVEN: *"Prometheus" (Opus 43). Walter Goehr conducting the Winterthur Symphony Orchestra.* (Concert Hall LP 10-63, $5.45.)

BEETHOVEN: *Sonatas in D (Opus 10, No. 3) and C (Opus 53). Kurt Appelbaum, piano.* (Westminster LP 50-44, $5.95.)

BEETHOVEN: *Concerto in C minor (Opus 37). Wilhelm Backhaus, piano, with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Karl Böhm.* (London LP 289, $5.95.)

AS AN instance of phonographic progress in this beginning of the LP decade of the Fifties, the "Prometheus" venture of Concert Hall is both pertinent and encouraging. Those who know the music have been limited to versions of the Overture only, by Weingartner, Toscanini, or Coates, all as "odd sides" of longer works. If there have been, previously, more than scraps of the ballet music, they have escaped my attention.

Here we have the work in its fulness of Overture, Introduction, numerous episodes, and concluding "Eroica" Variations—music not only of its own authentic quality and expressiveness, but full of provocative illuminations on Beethoven's mental processes, especially the variations. Goehr's feeling for the style is thoroughly good, the playing of the Winterthur ensemble suitable for the material, and

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the taping has been very well done.

Whether Appelbaum's disc of two Beethoven sonatas foreshadows a complete set of the thirty-two works may best be considered when he has produced, say, half of the series. There are those who doubt that any single pianist exists who can render equal justice to Opus 2 and Opus 106, the "Pathétique" and the C minor, Opus 111, not to mention a score of other works widely diverse in physical plan and emotional range. In this pairing Appelbaum has the fingers and the feeling to make the D major a welcome experience, especially the poignant *Largo e mesto*, which he plays beautifully. However, the "Waldstein's" first movement raises his blood pressure and muddies his technique to a result that futilizes comparison with standards of Arrau or Backhaus (in the LP area), not to mention others of older days. Westminster sustains its usual quality standard in this piano reproduction, but the "Waldstein" is a dubious compliment to those who considered it, in a mere technical sense, passable.

Backhaus and Böhm in the C minor concerto are a bit too much of a like-minded pair for the best results: the meeting of minds here deciding on a rather ponderous approach to this incisive work which robs it of vitality. My feeling is that the fingers of Backhaus simply cannot work fast enough for the scale passages of the opening movement at the desired tempo, and everything else is keyed to that limitation. The Solomon-Boult is only one version superior to it.

"Trout" No. 4

SCHUBERT: *Quintet in A ("Forellen"). Walter Panhoffer, piano, with Willi Boskovsky, violin, Gunther Breitenbach, viola, Nikolaus Hubner, cello, and Johann Krump, contrabass.* (London LP 223, $5.95.)

AS FORECAST last fall [RECORDINGS for October 1950], this is the expected full-length version by the same players represented in the truncated Remington issue (at $1.67) whose appearance coincided with versions by Peter Badura-Skoda and the Vienna Konzerthaus Quartet and Mieczyslaw Horszowski and the Budapest players. To resolve any confusion, the above was, of course, recorded independently, with all the care for which London is justly esteemed.

That care is evident in the effort expended to make the double bass constantly audible, without undue accentuation. For the most part it has been successfully achieved, though the effect on me is to attract the attention to the foundation of the building, so

(*Continued on page* 55)

Vocalists and Vocalism

BELLINI: *"A te, o cara" ("I Puritani"); and other operatic airs. Eugene Conley, tenor, with orchestra conducted by Warwick Braithwaite.* (London LP 280, $4.95.)

CHOPIN: *Three songs from Opus 74; and songs of Rachmaninoff and Villa-Lobos. Jennie Tourel, mezzo-soprano, with George Reeves and Erich Itor Kahn, pianists, and orchestra conducted by H. Villa-Lobos.* (Columbia LP 4357, $5.45)

FAURÉ: *"Tristesse" and ten other songs; also six songs by Schubert. Gerard Souzay, baritone, with Jacqueline Bonneau, piano.* (London LP 245, $5.95.)

SCHUBERT: *"Gute Nacht" and five other songs; also three each of Brahms and Hugo Wolf. Karl Schmitt-Walter, baritone, with Franz Rupp and Ferdinand Leitner, pianists.* (Capitol-Telefunken LP 8123, $5.)

AN ALPHABETICAL arrangement of the principal composers represented in these offerings is as orderly a way of dealing with these miscellaneous collections as presents itself, for there is no real hierarchy of merit. Each of the four sings some parts of the assorted numbers excellently, others less well.

My fancy inclines to the Conley disc for its splendid treatment of the two excerpts from Bellini's "I Puritani," ("A te, o cara" and "Vieni, vieni fra questa braccia"). Each has a vocal climax above the tenor's normal "staff" (C sharp in one, D in the other) and Conley deals with them not merely as a virtuoso but also a musician. I would not say he manages without effort, but there is little evidence of strain. Moreover, his style in these, and also in the tomb scene from "Lucia," "Cielo e mar" from "Gioconda," and "O Paradiso" from "L'Africana," is admirable in its manliness, its straightforward musical accent and lack of exaggeration. London's engineers are a solid asset for Conley, as is Braithwaite's conducting.

Much of the matter on the Tourel LP has been issued previously in conventional form, but not the best music or the most interesting performance. That honor I would assign to the three-songs of Chopin "The Maiden's Wish," "My Joys," and "Melancholie," which Miss Tourel, with her gift of tongues, sings in Polish (she does the Villa-Lobos in Portuguese and the Rachmaninoff in Russian). Each is a tone poem in miniature, on the expressive order of the best Mazurkas, and the accompaniments by Reeves are in artistic accord with the singer's effort. The six "Sérestas" are full of the Villa-Lobos quality (as the ten of Rachmaninoff are of his) with the composer's participation as conductor of no small contribution. The Rachmaninoff, for those who may have forgotten, include "All Things Depart," "O Cease Thy Singing, Maiden Fair," "In the Silence of the Night," "Lilacs," and several other favorites. Kahn is the able pianist here, and all the reproduction is excellent.

Souzay's recent debut in New York and his appearance elsewhere in the country reinforced some impressions of his early records and weakened some convictions formerly held about him. He is an artist of quality, surely, but also a little limited in scope, with some montony in his vocal approach which should be a matter for his early attention. The ten-and-one Fauré songs ("Après un Rêve," "Claire de Lune," "Arpège," "En Sourdine," and "Diane, Séléné" are some of the other titles) are all well sung, but not one with really paralyzing emotional effect. Somewhat similarly, the Schubert songs ("Gesänge des Harfners," "Fischerweise," "Der Wanderer," "Der Doppelgänger," "Haidenröslein," and "Der Erlkönig") are all *well-accomplished*, to use a common phrase, but rarely re-created. At that, "Der Wanderer" has more impact than any of the Fauré songs, and "Der Doppelgänder" is also intelligently managed.

Finally, there is the lyric baritone Karl Schmitt-Walter remembered from some prewar green-label Telefunken discs; the label, on Capitol, is still green, but the art, not quite so. Perhaps it is the reproduction which lets him down, but there is hardly the richness or contrast for such songs as "Gute Nacht" or "Lindenbaum." By the standard of such as Tauber or Schlusnus this is merely "of the school," hardly the authentic thing itself. The Brahms trio includes "Minnelied," "Ständchen," and "Feldensamkeit," the Wolf selection "Dass doch gemalt all' deine Reize wären," "Auf einer Wanderung," and "Benedeit, die Sel'ge Mutter." Here, too, the order of accomplishment is amiable rather than penetrating. The recording throughout is no more than serviceable.

—THE EDITOR.

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Recordings Reports: Classical LP's and Albums

See page 61 for Pop Roundup

WORK, PERFORMER, DATA	REPORT
Beethoven: Symphony No. 3. Erich Kleiber conducting the Concertgebouw Orchestra. London LP 239, $5.95.	Those who crave the best sound of contemporary "Eroicas" will find it here—at the expense, however, of a "Marcia Funebre" broken half-way through. Since both Columbia and Victor have been able to manage otherwise, London's preference is indeed singular. Kleiber's treatment is thoroughly good, although the first movement lacks the tension and force that Toscanini releases.
Dvorak: "Slavonic Dances." Karel Jirák conducting the FOK Symphony Orchestra. Mercury LP set 4, $9.70.	A full-scale treatment reminiscent of the famous Talich set, for Prague is the point of origin of this one also. However, Jirák is a much more prosaic hand for these works than his predecessor, and the recording is feebler than current standards endorse. There is more than a little noise on the surfaces, probably an increment of the original matrices.
Händel: "Water Music." Richard Bales conducting the National Gallery Orchestra. WCFM LP 2, $5.95.	An eminently worthy project, with the set of twenty movements (from which the Harty series of half a dozen was extracted) presented in full. However, Bales is no more than a moderately able student of such music as this, and the orchestra and reproduction both lack luster and richness of sound. Mason Jones, of Philadelphia fame, is the virtuoso first horn. Good for Händelians if they do not expect more than these words imply.
Kabalevsky: "The Comedians." Arthur Fiedler conducting the Boston Pops Orchestra. RCA Victor LP 1106, $5.67.	First-class work by Fiedler of a suite already done with excellent results by Kurtz, for Columbia. Very bright playing, splendid reproduction. Those perplexed for a choice may recall that the Kurtz "Comedians" was coupled with Lecoq's "Fille de Mlle. Angot" Suite; Fiedler is partial to Leroy Anderson's "Classical Juke Box," a series of whimsies which strengthens his right to be considered the American Eric Coates.
Meyerbeer: "Les Patineurs." John Hollingsworth conducting the Royal Opera House Orchestra. Columbia LP 4362, $5.45.	A fine big orchestra gives more sound value to this medley of Meyerbeer (used by the Sadlers' Wells Ballet for its skating ballet) than has been usual in live performances hereabouts. Hollingsworth is a young man who has a flair for Meyerbeer, at any rate; more than that remains for the future. Overside, Robert Irving directs Arthur Bliss's routine score for "Checkmate."
Mozart; Fantasia in C minor (K.475); Sonata in C minor (K.457); Fantasia in C minor (K.396). Rudolf Firkusny, piano. Columbia 4356, $5.45.	Very creditable work by Firkusny of works which have, curiously, been duplicated on the Mercury and Allegro labels by Abram Chasins and Leonid Hambro. This, however, is a more advantageous combination of them, and a fine piano sound. Not "specialist" Mozart playing, but smooth-flowing, well-phrased musical thinking without stylistic mannerisms.
Mozart: Concerto in G (K.216). Isaac Stern, violin, playing and conducting a chamber orchestra. Columbia 4326, $4.85.	Stern as soloist *and* conductor is too much Stern for my taste, especially vis-à-vis Mozart. That is to say, his rugged musical impulses could well do with the restraining hand of a conductor as authoritative as himself. There is much virtue in the performance, both violinistic and musical; but a dimension is lacking. Fine reproduction in this and the C minor sonata of Beethoven, Opus 30, No. 2 (with Alexander Zakin, as previously issued on 78 rpm).
Scarlatti: Nine sonatas. Ralph Kirkpatrick, harpsichord. Concert Hall LP 1070, $4.50.	Splendid work by Kirkpatrick in a series of works which have not, to my knowledge, been previously available in this country. (None is included in Landowska's HMV Scarlatti Society Album #1.) This adds a special value to a record which is well endowed with same. Excellent reproduction also. The Longo numbers are 126 and 127, 321 and 460, 457, 10, 279, 415 and 215. The pairings are reasonably explained by Kirkpatrick in his own annotation.
Sibelius: "Swan of Tuonela," "Finlandia," etc. Eugene Ormandy conducting the Philadelphia Orchestra. Columbia 2158, $4.	A miscellaneous disc, to be sure, with three Rachmaninoff Preludes (orchestrated by Lucien Cailliet) as the overmatter. All the playing is good, especially John Minsker's English horn solo in the "Swan." The Preludes, incidentally, are the G minor and the G major. What? The third? Neither ink nor space are required for that information.
Tchaikovsky: "Nutcracker" Suite. Leopold Stokowski and his orchestra. RCA Victor LP 46, $4.72.	Masterful nutcracking by the master nutcracker of them all, aided no little by such specially licensed nutcrackers as Julius Baker, flute; Robert Bloom, oboe; and even Maximilian Pilzer, celeste. Finely detailed performance, exceptionally reproduced.
Tchaikovsky: Concerto No. 1 (B flat minor). Clifford Curzon, piano, with George Szell conducting the New Symphony Orchestra. London LP 276, $5.95.	As might be anticipated this tops, as sound, any previous version of this work, including Rubinstein-Mitropolous, Levant-Ormandy, and Hansen-Mengelberg. It is also more sober in mood, less exhibitionistic in temper than any of these, and thoroughly satisfying for its own style of treatment. As a matter of fact, it is so long since I have heard the work treated thus, either on records or in concert, that it is a refreshing change. But it is neither the traditional, nor the most satisfying approach to the score.
Tchaikovsky: Concerto in D. Jascha Heifetz, violin, with Walter Süsskind conducting the Philharmonia Orchestra. RCA Victor LP 1111, $5.67.	Some months ago a new version of this work by Isaac Stern prompted the observation that only a new Heifetz performance would be likely to excel it. Now we have the new Heifetz, and the issue is very much a draw. The peerless fiddler is his splendid self, but neither the orchestral playing directed by Süsskind nor the microphoning matches the comparable work of Alexander Hilsberg and the pick-up of the Philadelphia Orchestra on the Stern disc. Whatever the reason, this is not sound of the quality expected from Hayes, Middlesex.
Wagner: "Rienzi" Overture. Leopold Stokowski directing the New York Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra. Columbia ML 2153, $4.	East side, West side, Stokowski's all around town with good records this month. His conception of 1927 (as evidenced on RCA Victor 6624/5) hasn't deteriorated, and the Philharmonic soars and roars expressively for him. With it is the "Wotan's Farewell" previously issued as MX 301. Brave noises, both.
Wagner: "Wotan's Farewell," etc. Paul Schoeffler, with the Vienna Philharmonic conducted by Rudolf Moralt and Karl Böhm. London LP 288, $4.95.	A welcome redemption for the disappointing 78-rpm version by Schoeffler with Rankl, issued in the early days of ffrr. Moralt is the fine associate both here and in the concluding "Magic Fire" music. Not the Schorr-like richness, but in every other way dominating singing. On the second side Schoeffler sings "Non più andrai" brilliantly, "Madamina" heartily, "Era la notte" and "Iago's Credo" ("Otello") with imposing versatility. Böhm is the conductor for this side. —Irving Kolodin.

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REVIEWS

(*Continued from page 53*)

to speak, rather than to the structure as a whole. As for the playing, it is somewhat on the subdued side, without any such sparkling element as Badura-Skoda provides on the Westminster disc. Also, the brighter sound of the latter is more appropriate to the music.

More Historic Horowitz

BARBER: *Sonata, Opus* 26; and CHOPIN: *Sonata in B flat minor, Opus* 35. *Vladimir Horowitz, piano.* (RCA Victor LP 1113, $5.67.)

ACCORDING to the advertising on the front face of this issue, it is CHOPIN and barber; according to the musicological annotations on the back it is Barber and Chopin. By the results that reach the ear, the judgments must surely be BARBER and chopin; for the evidence is plain that this is the most impressive accomplishment yet of a composer with some very impressive ones to his credit.

I say this despite a first movement which, to me, is irresolute and, if well-planned, with a plan not immediately comprehensible. However, the scherzo is light-fingered magic, the *adagio mesto* richly designed and fully realized, the final fuga the most maturely assured, invigorating piece of musical thinking any composer of Barber's generation has achieved. To be sure, there is the propulsion of Horowitz's vastly impressive performance to be reckoned with, but it doesn't sound to me as though he was improvising. It is all on the printed page, which well repays study with the record. Those who care to ponder the ironies of contemporary life may note that this work came into being as a commission for the twenty-fifth year of the League of Composers, through funds donated by Richard Rodgers and Irving Berlin. Robin Hood couldn't do better.

Taking all things together, Horowitz's Chopin sonata is the most beautiful of the available ones. I choose the word intentionally, for there are some details that one might question musically (in the rather overstressed first movement for example), but it is difficult to imagine more beautiful sound in the trio of the scherzo or the whole of the "Marche Funèbre." Both sides are marked by that fine balance and proportion admired in last month's Schumann "Kinderscenen" and Chopin Mazurkas. —IRVING KOLODIN.

SONGWRITER BLUES

(*Continued from page 49*)

labels fold. The publisher says not to give up because there's still Albany Al, and he's big in the swamps, and the market is in the swamps. Snow falls, and the Unknown goes to work demonstrating vegetable shredders. He has made $13.50 in the music business during the past three years, and spent about $100—on phone calls. He is secretly considered by some songwriters to have averaged out pretty well. One night he is splurging on lasagna, having bought a gun with one bullet in it, when the guy behind the counter engages him in conversation. It turns out that the guy has a lot of Ins with publishers, because many of them eat there. He listens while the Unknown Songwriter sings his songs in a quavering voice. The counterboy says he thinks the songs are great. Man, you're Talented. In fact he might be able to do something for the songwriter. One plate of lasagna is forgotten, the songwriter hocks his gun, buys a clean shirt, quits his job, and the world is a beautiful place. I don't know the end of this story, but they say it's the hardest business in the world.

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Spotlight on the Moderns

SINCE OPERA and symphony have a monopoly on professional and lay musical attention, it is no surprise that relatively few people have reacted to Hindemith's provocative revision of his twenty-five-year-old "Marienleben" (Lyrichord LP album 6, $11.90). This setting of the fifteen poems of Rilke's "Life of the Virgin Mary" has long enjoyed prestige for the high quality of its inspirations, and if its many attributes have remained unknown beyond a limited circle, it is because of the difficulties of a vocal part that has been made substantially more accessible in the 1948 edition. The composer has, however, scrubbed its surface so forcibly that he has levelled off not only the impurities and obstacles but also some of the finest details. Specific curves that stood in relief have been replaced by a flat surface that is masterly in its consistency, but that suffers a loss of freshness from this very consistency.

It has become clear by now that music is moving in more than one direction at once. But in the Twenties the emancipation of tones that was advocated by the atonalists and kindred spirits had its effect on almost everyone working in a contemporary idiom. It was only later that Hindemith realized how much the clash between his vocal line and the piano was inorganic to "Das Marienleben" and that the general disdain for the natural capacities of the human voice could be avoided. He therefore decided to rework his little masterpiece. All this was fine. But meanwhile he had organized the elements of his personal style into a system which he imposed on the spontaneities of his youth, working laboriously for many years. He had also become a more deeply religious man, and he readjusted the original tonalities to conform to a religio-mystic key scheme. Except for its thematic germs, the new version is virtually a different work. Frances James, soprano, deserves credit for her efforts with this cycle, which fills two LP's and is still far from easy to sing. But I hope some bold performer will defy the composer and give us the original too, or at least those portions (the variations and passacaglia are not among them) that have retained their vitality through the past quarter century.

The free association of notes works best with composers who are guided instinctually towards sensitive sonorities. Hindemith's strength lies in melody, line, organic depth. In contrast to him, Bartók and Berg get by with almost pure sensation, and two works superbly reproduced by (Peter) Bartók Records are at hand to illustrate this. Berg's String Quartet, Opus 3 (LP 006, $4.85), despite a systematic organization carried out under Schönberg's immediate influence, communicates itself primarily to the emotions, plotting again and again, perhaps too often, a curve from hysteria to despair. Hearing it is like eavesdropping on the solitary outpourings of an anguished soul. The instrumental effects (like the tremulous ones produced by the wooden part of the bow) are more imaginative in the later "Lyric Suite." But a stunning performance by the New Music Quartet—which also sounds brilliant in Casella's fairly effective, though somewhat dated, "Five Pieces," on the reverse side—lends considerable distinction to this release.

Bartók's "Miraculous Mandarin" of 1919 (Bartók LP 301, $5.95) remains sumptuously colored through its most dissonant measures. It has a touch of madness and the primitivist furor that was so typical of the period and is best known through Stravinsky's "Petrouchka" and "Le Sacre." Composed for ballet, it roams and quietly improvises for long stretches, but if you approach it with patience you will enjoy some blood-curdling sounds, descriptive of a gruesome plot. The New Symphony Orchestra recorded it in London under Tibor Serly's direction.

The same orchestra, conducted by Franco Autori, gives a sample of the same composer in a lighter vein in his "Dance Suite" of 1923 (coupled with Serly's transcription of Mozart's Fantasy in F Minor, Bartók Records LP 302, $5.95). There is a limit on how much one can take of the settings of Hungarian folksongs, with the inevitable two or three impulses at the phrase-endings. If you have not had your fill, the "Dance Suite" should satisfy as well as anything in this genre. Or you may prefer this material evoked more obliquely by Kodály, who makes an unaccompanied cellist sound like a folk improviser on the zither by exploiting the instrument with exceptional ingenuity and skill (Period LP 510, $5.95). The So-

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nata, Op. 8, has its qualities, but it is loose in form, and it is a drain on the attention to hear a lone cellist go through much the same rhapsodic motions repeatedly over two sides of an LP. The performer, Janos Starker, is partly to blame. He stretches out the phrases mercilessly.

Folk inspirations in Janácek's "Youth" are set in a broader frame (Mercury LP 15009, $4.). The Czech landscape seems to cause the composer's spirit to soar, and he communicates a bracing outdoor atmosphere. This mild work, a classic by now in contemporary chamber music, is inventive, brightly scored for woodwind sextet, and well played by the Prague Wind Quintet (augmented), which is also heard in pleasantly innocuous fragments of incidental music by Frantisek Bartos for "Bourgeois Gentilhomme," which share the first side with the Allegro of the Janácek.

Martinu's inspirations in "Sinfonietta la Jolla" are more American than Czech, and I suspect this is a credo of allegiance to his newly adopted country as well as a means of evoking the regional spirit of the La Jolla Society, which commissioned the work and has recorded it under Nikolai Sokoloff's direction (Alco LP 1211, $4.85). It is amusing to observe how expertly he has requisitioned the current standard American molds, as well as the folk materials, with his familiar combination of first-class metier and glibness. On the reverse side the lovely, light soprano voice of Alice Mock is heard with the same orchestra in "Les Illuminations" of Britten. It was chiefly through this product of 1939 that he came to our attention as a bright young man with promise, before he won popular success. His taste was better then, but his tactics have not changed. He has a very shrewd sense and technique for collecting the most delectable musical edibles, and serving them up nicely rewarmed. His sources in this work are a whole line of French composers from Berlioz to Ravel and Poulenc.

Poulenc, who has developed a style for vocal music, is also addicted to borrowing fairly openly when it comes to his instrumental works. Yet, before your turntable has made many revolutions, the sweet, sympathetic personality of the author of his Organ Concerto makes itself felt (coupled with organ music by Franck, Columbia LP 4329, $4.85). As in all of his large instrumental efforts the form is somewhat weak and the quality of material uneven. But there are exciting and moving episodes. None of the reverberations of E. Power Biggs's playing elude the microphone, but the performance is an intense and animated one under Richard Burgin's direction.

—ARTHUR BERGER.

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VERDI—FIFTY YEARS AFTER

(*Continued from page* 45)

Roncole would have been willing to recognize and to admit.

Once Verdi had earned widespread recognition by persisting through defeats and victories, his success was great, enduring, and cumulative. By the time of his death fifty years ago he was an Italian national hero and a composer loved throughout the civilized world. Only Germany, supine under the spells of Wagner and the celebrations of the Wagnerians, remained somewhat aloof and unconvinced. And there was danger elsewhere that poor performances, joined to the sheer sorcery of many Verdian melodies in themselves, might reduce his operas to collections of tunes, the kind of music that is removed from its matrix, transposed, arranged, and denatured until its dramatic force and relevance are altogether lost. But it was precisely Germany, in the 1920's, that began to restore Verdi to his rightful position in the musical world. Francis Toye, in his masterly "Giuseppe Verdi: His Life and Works," quotes the confirming statistics. Italian opera houses had always kept Verdi alive at home, but fashions in repertoire for England, the United States, and to some extent France, moved to a different rhythm, started by Wagner long before. It was the German rebirth of interest in Verdi and the grudging, gradual, but finally wholehearted enthusiasm of German critics and musicologists which at last taught the rest of the world to begin agreeing with Italy. Probably the restoration of Verdi outside Italy would have occurred some time without the example of Dresden, Berlin, Munich, and Vienna, but it was in those and twenty other German cities and towns that it actually began. During the 1927-28 season, for example, 135 opera houses in Germany gave 1,576 performances of Wagner, 1,513 of Verdi; no other composer received 1,000. During the 1930 season the Vienna Opera gave forty-nine performances of Wagner, forty-six of Verdi, and not thirty of any other composer.

MORE important, this German renascence of Verdi was not confined to many repetitions of a few warhorses. It included not only "La Forza del Destino," "Don Carlo," "Simon Boccanegra," "Nabucodonosor," "Macbeth," and "Luisa Miller," but also such comparative failures as "I Masnadieri" and "I Due Foscari." Germany, freeing itself a little at last from the Wagnerian enchantment and Frau Cosima's determination to prolong it, had begun to discover for itself the beauties of balance among opera's component elements. Even in the pages of German musicologists a new tone of respect for the Italian began to appear. No longer was he patronized or, worse, praised only when "Otello" and "Falstaff" were patted on the head in the mistaken belief that they showed Verdi absorbing Wagnerism. Not even the tendentious adoration of Wagner practised by the National Socialist regime of Hitler succeeded in stopping for long the gradual re-evaluation of nineteenth-century opera. Today the simple statement that Verdi was a great composer, at least Wagner's equal in fashioning operas, and in some over-all aspects his superior, will raise few eyebrows.

The reception given during the current Metropolitan Opera season to a generally magnificent revival of "Don Carlo," like the reactions in fairly recent years to "Simon Boccanegra," "Un Ballo in Maschera," "La Forza del Destino," "Otello," and "Falstaff," shows that, given a proper opportunity, our own opera public will appreciate the totality of Verdi's greatness. He is no longer the composer merely of "Rigoletto," "Il Trovatore," "La Traviata," and "Aïda." The phonograph, too, has been playing an increasingly admirable part in spreading his true fame. We are grateful to it for, among much else, complete modern recordings of "La Forza del Destino," "Ernani," "Falstaff," and "Rigoletto"— for the ability thus given us to summon wonderfully vital music to our living rooms in performances ranging from adequate to excellent. But this gift, I think, should be used in full understanding of what it is.

Deprived of actors, action, and stage investiture, operas lose far more of their nature in phonographic reproduction and radio broadcast (and, for that matter, in telecasts) than is lost by symphonies, concertos, sonatas, even oratorios. I hope that we are not mistaking for the real thing what even the finest recordings and best reproducing machines can give us. Of Verdi's creations, only the "Manzoni" Requiem is well served by phonograph and radio. The others, from "Macbeth" and "Luisa Miller" to "Otello" and "Falstaff," are stage works for singing actors and orchestra supported by scenery and costumes. In an absolutely basic sense Verdi's operas must be seen to be believed.

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RECORD PRICES

(*Continued from page 48*)

but recall that as recently as the Heritage series of 1947/8, just one item on the Chaliapin "Boris" LP was pegged at close to the present price for all six. As for the disc of ensembles on which the celebrated "Lucia" sextet appears, it offers for $5.67 what was considered salable for $32 in the Twenties.

IF A manufacturer can record twenty-eight minutes on a twelve-inch side without detriment to the music, and fifteen minutes on a ten-inch side, he patently is debasing his product if he issues a twelve-inch side shorter than fifteen minutes. If a manufacturer believes that twenty minutes is the maximum duration permissible for the best reproduction on a twelve-inch side he should certainly not exceed it. We know that manufacturers practise the first debasement, and suspect they tolerate the second (according to their varying concepts of optimum duration). Fortunately the solution is as easy as its necessity is hard to understand. The following systemization is herewith offered to the industry.

(1) Fixation by the industry of time limits for ten- and twelve-inch sides not audibly invidious to the records, invariable except when technical advances may dictate expansion or contraction of the period.

(2) Use of the larger diameter to be avoided in all cases where the music to be recorded does not exceed the duration allotted the smaller as determined by (1).

(3) Except where the music to be recorded is longer than the time allotted to the largest dimension, no interruptions not prescribed by the composer to be tolerated.

(4) Where the music to be recorded presents special structural difficulties, as in an uneven distribution of its length among its movements, calm musical judgment to be the only recourse for its placement upon discs. Thus, assuming the present Columbia achievements of thirty-one minutes for twelve's and seventeen minutes for ten's to be proper and unexceedable, the problem of recording a work in four movements lasting eighteen, eighteen, five, and fourteen minutes respectively, could be solved in the best musical interest *only* by use of three twelve-inch sides, despite the loss of nearly forty minutes of recording potential latent on the discs. Similarly, movements of sixteen, fifteen, fifteen, and sixteen minutes respectively, could be encompassed with musical propriety, according to the Columbia standard assumed to be proper, either by a double-sided twelve or two double-sided ten's. Musical judgment being then indecisive, considerations of convenience and economy should dictate choice of the twelve. The most difficult cases are those in which the over-all length of a work may be fitted into the limits of a double-sided ten but not a single-sided twelve, and where the structure is such that employment of a ten would involve the arbitrary interruption of a movement. Again the solution is not recondite to ordinary musical intelligence, and is occasionally practised: three movements on the obverse of a twelve and the fourth near the periphery of the reverse, with a wide blank band interposed before as germane a work as will nearly fill the remaining space.

(5) The music consultants of the industry to have the power of decision and the ability to think before editing. Five minutes' thought is more valuable than any period of quiescent reaction to the sodden habits of a dead and inferior era. The "Egmont" Overture cannot decently occupy alone a twelve- or ten-inch LP side. Any music consultant knows that the music for "Egmont" includes a good deal more than the Overture, which could well be included.

Old habits, particularly when bad, persist. It may surprise that the proposed system is not in operation. Perhaps it will be. It is too much to expect, however, that the industry will heed a further proposal for a completer rationalization, to drop the seven-inch disc in favor of one about 8.5 inches in diameter, capable of bridging the gap between the present seven-inchers with their artificially limited duration, and the present ten-inchers which play three and four times as long. With existing diameters we are limited to evil alternatives: (1) That immense numbers of standard overtures, arias, scenas, songs and suites lasting, say, ten minutes be available on seven-inch with gratuitous interruptions; (2) that such works waste a large proportion of the available space of ten-inchers; (3) that they waste a larger proportion of the available space of twelve-inchers ("Egmont"); (4) that they be included in an assembly of short works more or less irrelevant, on either ten's or twelve's.

The seven-inchers were born tied to a 78 rpm duplicate. They are now tied to a dead era. —C. G. BURKE.

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HITS AND MISSES

ONE OF the greatest items in hot jazz discology is being marketed for the first time at popular prices. This is the Library of Congress recording of the late Jelly Roll Morton —more than seven hours of his talking, singing, and piano playing. Hitherto sold only as a complete set of forty-five twelve-inch 78 rpm records, "The Saga of Mr. Jelly Roll" will now be offered on twelve long-playing discs, which may be bought separately and of which we have so far received the first two (Circle L-14001, L-14002, $5.95 each).

These records are musts—like the foundation works of Louis Armstrong. The historic New Orleans composer-pianist had a spontaneous narrative style quite as moving as his redolent baritone or his economical piano mastery. On the first disc he talks of his family background and his beglamored hours at the French Opera House in New Orleans before the First World War. He shows how "Tiger Rag" was developed from a quadrille, and plays that ineffably relaxed and relaxing drag called "Mr. Jelly Roll." He cannot speak or sing or put his fingers to the keys without lyrical loveliness. In the second record he recalls a minstrel-style favorite, "The Animule Ball," gives a stunning description of the sartorial talents of his Crescent City contemporaries (some of them wore flashing lights in their shoes) and then evokes a New Orleans Negro funeral in what may be safely described as one of the richest religious passages ever recorded.

Jelly's whole operation at the Library of Congress Steinway is further testimony, if any were needed, that the original New Orleans jazz was built upon melodious delight. Songfulness is the gift and the distinguishing mark of true New Orleans hot music, and it may be heard from the city's newest group of youngsters, the Basin Street Six, in a long-playing record of eight numbers (Circle L-403, $3.85), several of which are also available at 78 rpm. The band is led by the twenty-year-old trumpeter George Girard, with the nineteen-year-old clarinetist Pete Fountain, trombonist Joe Rotis, pianist Roy Zimmerman, bassist Bunny Frank, and drummer Charlie Duke. The music is partly, and most winningly, arranged, and the band has sparkling attack, great ease of action, and transparency of texture. There is the constant sense of power in reserve.

The opposite sense is provided by a long-playing disc of Conrad Janis and his Tailgate Jazz Band (Circle L-404, $3.85), a group of youngsters and veterans gathered around an actor-turned-trombonist. The spirit here is exceedingly willing, and the flesh is anything but weak: it is, in fact, pressing most of the time. Good fun in places—but we would like to call Mr. Janis's attention to Mr. Girard's wonderful treatment of a Mares-Stitzel tune called "I Am Going Home," which we had never heard and which the Basin Street Six plays in a way that defines some of the dulcet virtues of a New Orleans upbringing.

Then there are the veterans who were encountered in Rudi Blesh's 1947 radio show, "This Is Jazz." Some of their performances are perpetuated on a long player (Circle L-402, $3.85) which is full of excitement, from Wild Bill Davison's fervent lead trumpet to the irresistible punch of Jimmy Archey's trombone. As a struggling aspirant on the trombone, we are constantly torn between the masters, but discrimination ceases when Archey plays. It would be indecent to do aught but listen. With James P. Johnson and Ralph Sutton spelling each other on the piano, the band plays "Big Butter and Egg Man," "Tishomingo Blues," "Sensation," etc.

If we may scramble metaphors, it is to be reported that Xavier Cugat has been carrying mambos to Newcastle. In other words, he has written a "Cuban Mambo" which is played with authentic power and pulse by the mambo king himself, Perez Prado and his orchestra (RCA Victor 20-3988, 79¢). The magical matter here has a great deal to do with two long, nostalgic chords, several times repeated, which establish a sense of tropic shores and pleasures presumably voluptuous.

No such atmosphere emerges from the efforts of Risë Stevens and Robert Merrill to deal with Irving Berlin's hits from "Call Me Madam"—"It's a Lovely Day Today" and "You're Just in Love" (RCA Victor 10-3108, $1.). The operatic pair swoop into these ditties in true operatic style, which is flagrantly unsuitable. On the other hand, Mary Martin is quite successful, if not so brilliant as Ethel Merman, with the many opportunities of Cole Porter's grand old "Anything Goes"—a long-playing résumé of the whole score (Columbia LP 2159, $4.).

—WILDER HOBSON.

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Pop Roundup

EVEN if we hadn't seen and loved GUYS AND DOLLS, we're cercertain that Decca's original-cast waxing (DL-8036) would have proved no less captivating. We've talked about the show's Hit Parade contenders in earlier columns, and now we find the special material equally exciting on discs. Any comparison of Frank Loesser's score with others by the Porters, Berlins, Kerns, and Rodgers is superfluous, for Loesser's style is entirely his own—musically sound, spontaneous, witty, and warm. His ideas here, as in his hit songs "Slow Boat to China" and "Baby, It's Cold Outside," are off the beaten track, but palatable to the masses. There's nothing chi-chi or overly sophisticated in this GUYS AND DOLLS material, but every line reveals the cleverness and craft of its creator. The stars who enact the Runyon characters do as well with the songs. Isabel Bigley's fresh voice is well above the stage norm, and she does wonderfully by such already established hits as "If I Were a Bell," "I've Never Been in Love Before," and the deserving ballad "I'll Know." Vivian Blaine's characterization of a Broadway doll hits a peak in "A Bushel and a Peck." Generally, such wholesomeness and vitality are rarely found in modern musicals.

Unless, that is, Ethel Merman is present. RCA Victor had the original-cast recording rights to Berlin's CALL ME MADAM, but not the star. Decca had her under contract and refused to let go, though the latter company was restricted from using certain songs until the prior release of the RCA album. So Decca last month issued an album of seven highlights, most of them with Merman (DL-5304 [33]; A-813 [78]; 9-153 [45]), while RCA issued thirteen songs and the Overture, substituting Dinah Shore for the unavailable star (RCA LOC-1000 [33]; OC-1 [78]; WOC-1 [45]). Now, restrictions ended, Decca has added most of the other tunes and offers a total of twelve, including those issued previously, in a new album (DL-8035; A-818; 9-166). This release may upset Merman fans who have already invested in the smaller set, especially since the new issue contains the gentle lass's "Hostess with the Mostes' on the Ball." Gordon Jenkins's orchestra and chorus are present on most of the Decca "extras."

In sharp contrast to the "Guys and Dolls" score, we have the sophisticated, subtly (and not so subtly) suggestive Cole Porter contributions to OUT OF THIS WORLD (COL ML-4390; MM-980; A-980). The ballads grow nevertheless with each rehearing. It's all quite clever and cultured in the fashion exclusive with Porter. The long-time missing star Charlotte Greenwood sounds fine on this wax.

Jazz Beat

In most varieties of dixieland imagination and sensitivity are less important than punch and ensemble coordination. What Bobby Hackett plays on his trumpet may not be pure dixie, but certainly he has more roots in this style than elsewhere. Still, his Bix-derived invention is delicate, toneful, and melodious. There's a new LP, BOBBY HACKETT JAZZ SESSION (COL CL-6156), featuring Bobby with piano, drums, bass, and guitar. Herein he plays a couple of ballads, including "A Room with a View" and some dixie favorites, including "Tin Roof Blues" and "Fidgety Feet."

In response to heavy demand from several sectors, Columbia has reissued a number of great sides, most of which appeared on the subsidiary Vocalion and Okeh labels about ten years ago. Among the best are Jimmie Lunceford's sophisticated instrumental UPTOWN BLUES (COL 30232) and Count Basie's brace of jump sides, POUND CAKE and CLAP HANDS, HERE COMES CHARLIE (COL 30231). Both of the latter feature brilliant tenor sax solos by Lester Young. . . . A group of Ellingtonians headed by Johnny Hodges and his alto wail and choke through a moody JITTERBUG'S LULLABY (COL 30233).

Mostly for Piano

Columbia's commendable Piano Moods series now includes nine LP medleys. The latest are by STAN FREEMAN (CL-6158) and EDDIE HEYWOOD (CL-6157). Freeman, one of the busiest studio pianists, is well known through his weekly appearances on "Piano Playhouse." He has a great deal of facility and ideas. On the other hand, Heywood is too relaxed. If you like the tunes and some gentle background music, his stylings are innocuous enough. Freeman's medley includes "Fascinatin' Rhythm," "Dancing on the Ceiling," "Carioca," etc. Heywood's has "All the Things You Are," "Try a Little Tenderness," and "St. Louis Blues."

—BILL SIMON.

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THE OTHER SIDE

(IMPORTED RECORDINGS)

LONDON.

DECCA'S third LP release, the greater portion of which reached the shops just in time for the festive season, is a great advance on anything that had gone before. I cannot altogether refrain from echoing the enthusiasm of all those who brightened their holiday with "Die Fledermaus" or with Act II of "Die Meistersinger." It seems to me that, of all operatic recordings that have ever appeared, "Die Fledermaus" most nearly approaches perfection. I can well believe Decca's statement that the set is breaking all London LP sales records in the USA. If the "Meistersinger" set is more open to criticism, that was only to be expected in view of the present dearth of first-class Wagner singers. Yet it is not the singers who fail us, but the engineer responsible for the balance between voices and orchestra. Evidently this recording was made before "Die Entführing aus dem Serail" reached critics and the public. It is strongly to be hoped that the almost unanimous verdict about the balance of both sets will be taken to heart and yield positive results. Yet, while admitting this defect, I feel little but gratitude towards all concerned in this venture. With these two recordings, and with others such as the Mozart Requiem, the Strauss tone poems, and Ferrier's "Frauenliebe und Leben," Decca may well claim to be "the voice of progress."

On the EMI side of the battlefront "ostrich" policies still appear to reign supreme, though it is difficult to believe that, despite their facade of calm disinterestedness, Hayes and Abbey Road are not deeply perturbed by Decca's successes. Why else should HMV suddenly discover that a recording of "Frauenliebe und Leben," made at least three years ago by Elisabeth Schumann, is after all good enough to be released? Listening to it one can hear at once why only the existence of Decca's LP disc by Ferrier should have brought about this change of heart; Madame Schumann is by no means in good voice and the recording far from satisfactory.

A duplication less premeditated than the above provides us with two recordings of Roussel's Fourth Symphony where previously none existed. Columbia's version of this splendid composition, finely played by the Philharmonia Orchestra under Karajan, owes its existence to the patronage of the Maharajah of Mysore. After the liberal portions of Medtner from the same open-handed source, Roussel's music comes as a welcome antidote, a breath of clean, Gallic air to purge the thick cobwebs of Medtner's pianoforte ruminations from our minds. Together with the Columbia set there has appeared the Capitol LP disc, coupling the Fourth Symphony with the Suite in F, but despite the more characteristic sound of the Lamoureux Orchestra I find Karajan's the more convincing performance.

I should have liked to have been at the studio when Sir Thomas Beecham and Gioconda de Vito joined forces to wax Mozart's G major Violin Concerto, K.216, for HMV. It must have been an interesting and entertaining session. The result does not speak of an entirely happy collaboration (though both artists are responsible for many sparkling and beautiful moments), for the ensemble is not always what it should be; in the Adagio there are times when Beecham fails to keep his grip on the accompaniment, a most unusual occurrence. Nevertheless, there is much to enjoy here, and the Rondo, with its delectable interlude, is wholly delightful. The recording is excellent.

Last month the Royal Philharmonic Society honored Sir John Barbirolli by conferring on him its Gold Medal. His work in rebuilding the Hallé Orchestra has been widely appreciated, and not even the most tempting offers, including Covent Garden and the BBC, have been able to tear him from Manchester with its proverbially gray skies. Recently promoted to HMV red labels, the Hallé has made a new recording of Tchaikovsky's "Swan Lake" Ballet Suite (Barbirolli's celebrated prewar set was with the London Philharmonic). The rich and colorful score is realized in masterly fashion. A work with similar appeal, though surprisingly neglected on records, is Dvorak's racy "Scherzo Capriccioso." HMV has now handsomely made amends for past omissions with a magnificent recording by the Philharmonia Orchestra under Kubelik. The Czech conductor tends to be erratic, but this particular performance is quite irresistible and the sound from these two discs (the fourth side contains the "Legende," Op. 59, No. 10) is among the best ever from EMI.

—THOMAS HEINITZ.

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Letters to the *RECORDINGS* Editor

No "Idomeneo"?

SIR: This letter is occasioned by a curious anomaly which has just come to my attention in "The Record Critics Vote" [RECORDINGS for December 1950]. A couple of months ago you reviewed two recordings of Mozart's "Idomeneo." The Editor gave the Haydn Society version the nod in every respect, and I hastened to add it to my collection. Last month I looked at the article mentioned above and noted not a mention of this recording . . . It was the Editor's own omission that made me wonder.

JOHN BARNWELL.

New York, N. Y.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *The lack of mention for "Idomeneo" on the Editor's part was an oversight, not a change of mind. I dare say all concerned could have doubled the length of the lists submitted, but the choices represented the* crème de la crème *of the year's issues.*

Approval for Canteloube

SIR: It was most interesting to find a review of Patricia Neway's Town Hall concert [*SRL* Nov. 25, 1950] and encouraging to find you not only liked but knew the music. Several months ago I was presented with the Columbia album and, as they are pretty exciting stuff, have since been trying to find out something about them. To no avail. Are there more?

PATRICIA TRACY.

Boston, Mass.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *As one Patricia to another, perhaps Miss Neway will favor Miss Tracy with the fruits of her own research on the subject. Beyond this, the Editor's personal knowledge is sketchy, although he can attest that the Columbia recording includes but a fraction (about one-third) of the whole Canteloube collection. We should welcome any erudition on the subject our readers possess, up to and including a comment at article length. For devout Canteloubers, I may mention that Susan Reed has done a new version for Columbia.*

LP Surfaces

SIR: Considering the several advantages of LP records—continuity, space-saving, price, and unbreakability—why can't something be done to make their surfaces less delicate? Despite the utmost care, scratches and nicks are easy to come by. Some of my ancient 78 rpms, on the other hand, are relatively indestructible.

PETER DRAKE.

Concord, N. H.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Reader Drake's complaint is one not limited to himself. As C. G. Burke remarked in his "Fifty Years of Record Prices" last month, the advantages of LP are already being taken for granted. Care is a requisite on the owner's part if he is to profit from advantages which accrue from infinite care on the manufacturer's part (in utilizing a groove both so shallow and so narrow that any miscalculation means a ruined master). Seventy-eights have a relatively deep and wide groove—also a self-protecting hiss of surface noise which one has been conditioned to accept and which blankets the clicks or bumps, from abrasions, all too audible on "silent" '33's.*

Footnote on Berlioz

SIR: I have just finished reading "A Burst of Berlioz," by Jacques Barzun [RECORDINGS for January]. Of interest to you may be the fact that Berlioz's "The Infant Christ" was presented on Christmas Eve by the Cathedral Choir and soloists of Immanuel Presbyterian Church of Los Angeles. Our organist was assisted at the four-manual Skinner [by a second organist]. The performance of the work was received here in Los Angeles with great enthusiasm, and we have had many requests to repeat it next year. Truly, the work is, as Mr. Barzun said, "humble, innocent, and rustic."

G. MALCOLM GROHER.

Los Angeles, Calif.

Who Wants an Index?

SIR: How about printing an alphabetic index by composer every six months or every year . . . giving the issue of RECORDINGS in which the review appeared as reference?

PERRIN C. HAILEY.

Little Rock, Ark.

SIR: As one who finds your RECORDINGS section of very special value, as compared with similar record reviews elsewhere, I am writing to ask whether you supply an annual index to the record reviews. If you do not do so now, I strongly urge consideration of such a project. Such an index could command fifty cents or a dollar.

WINTHROP W. CASE.

Pleasantville, N. Y.

SIR: Since few of us can buy, at the time of issue, all the records that interest us in a given month, I am sure many people share my exasperation when I decide to buy a certain item and cannot easily find, in RECORDINGS, the comments on the several versions that may have appeared lately. In other words, I'd like a chance to subscribe to an annual or semi-annual index? Could you open this subject up to your readers and poll their opinion?

MAC R. MARSHALL.

St. Louis, Mo.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *If there is sufficient interest in such a project,* RECORDINGS *would be happy to make an index available. Expressions of opinion are solicited, together with suggestions of preference regarding semi-annual or annual issuances, maximum price, etc. Such letters should be addressed: Index, Saturday Review of Recordings, 25 West 45th Street, New York 19, N. Y.*

Spade or Spada?

SIR: I see that in the libretto for RCA Victor's new "Rigoletto" Sparafucile's "A voi presente un uom' di spada sta" (Scene 2), is translated "You see before you a man with a spade." Surely this is one spot in which not to call a *spada* ("sword") a spade.

PARSIFAL.

Arlington, Va.

Help for McCormack

SIR: I am trying to increase my private collection of the records of John McCormack, whom I consider one of the greatest singers of this half-century. I now have 175 items. I am unable, however, to obtain good copies of "Salve dimora" from "Faust" and the "Flower Song" from "Carmen," as well as a few other great records.

JOSEPH HUNT.

Arlington, Va.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Reader Hunt can be reached at* 4112 *Fourth St. North.*

RECORD MART

RECORD MART is designed to provide a bulletin board on which may be posted buyers' or sellers' notice of anything odd, unusual, rare, or out of print on discs or the accessories thereto. Individuals as well as dealers may submit their offerings of duplicated discs, rare labels, old acoustics, society sets, private issues, or withdrawn items, albums, needles, record brushes, or the like. Rate: 30¢ per word; 10-word minimum. Count two extra words for box and number. Full payment must be received fifteen days before publication. We forward all mail received in answer to box numbers and submit postage bills periodically. Mail to be called for at this office will be held thirty days only. Address: RECORD MART, The Saturday Review, 25 West 45 Street, New York 19, N. Y.

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